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Palestine Re-peopled

A SIGN OF THE TIMES.





John Stephen

PALESTINE RE-PEOPLED ;

OR,

SCATTERED ISRAEL'S GATHERING.

A Sign of the Times.

BY THE

REV. JAMES NEIL, B.A.,

Formerly Incumbent of Christ Church, Jerusalem.

מְגִירָה יִשְׂרָאֵל יִקְבֹּצֶנָּה וְשָׁמְרוּ כְּרֵעָה עִדְרוּ

"He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock."—*Jeremiah xxxi. 10.*

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PREFACE.

AT a moment when all eyes are turned to the East, it cannot be unimportant to learn that, after the slumber of ages, Palestine is awakening to new life, and Israel are actually returning to its shores in such numbers, and at the same time in such a way as they have never been known to do, or could have done, since their formal banishment by the Emperor Hadrian, in the year A.D. 135. Many Jews, it is true, driven ruthlessly out of Spain in 1492, found a home in the Holy Land. To go still further back, the celebrated Hebrew traveller, Benjamin of Tudela, tells us in the twelfth century that he found considerable numbers residing in the various towns of Palestine which he visited—descendants, perhaps, amongst others, of some of the 30,000 who joined the arms of Chosroes the Persian in his capture of Jerusalem, A.D. 616, or even of the Jews whom Julian the Apostate restored A.D. 363, when he vainly endeavoured to discredit Christianity by rebuilding the Temple. But there is this all-important difference between what happened in the case of those who then returned, and those who

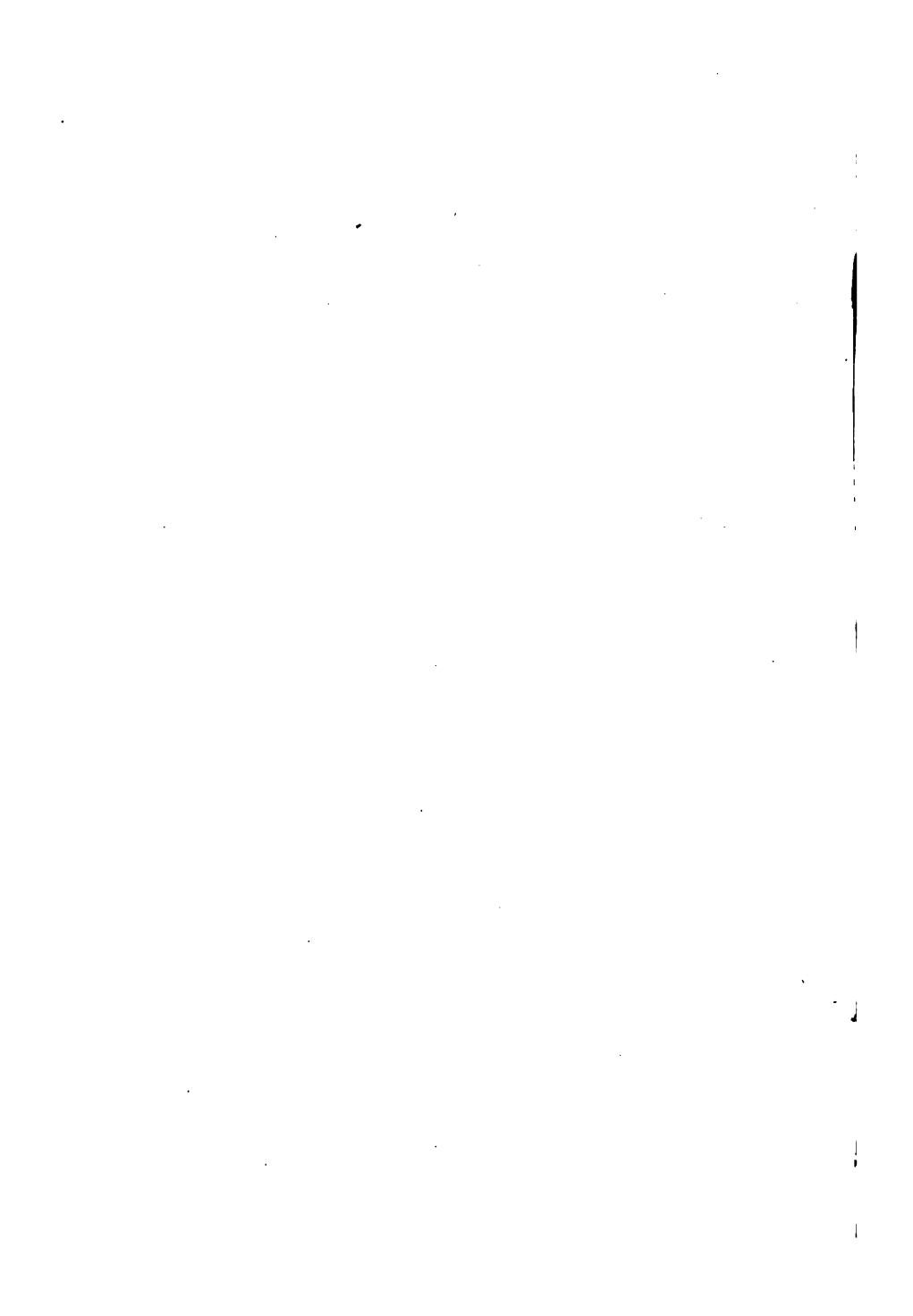
are now flocking back to the land of their forefathers. While in the former instances, whether under Pagan, Christian, or Muslim masters, they were, as all history shows, equally the subjects of extortion, oppression, and contumely; now they are beginning to hold a position of comfort, independence, and power. This remarkable change is in itself significant, and the whole movement should surely be watched by the student of prophecy with eager and expectant attitude.

The writer cannot doubt that Israel's partial restoration marks an all-important epoch. Mr. Bickersteth has well said: "The restoration of the Jews is the warning note on the clock of God's providence that the mystery of God is about to finish. We have the oath of God Himself (Daniel xii. 7) that at the termination of the time, times and a half, or 1,260 years, a period commencing with the rise of popery (Daniel vii. 25), the enemies of Israel shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, and the mystery of God shall be finished." No sign of the "time of the end" is now wanting to convince us that we are living amidst the closing scenes of this dispensation.* "The night" of six thousand years of sin and sorrow "is far spent, the day" of millennial peace and glory, is "at hand!" Albeit the hour before dawn is the

* See Appendix A.

darkest, and warning on this subject is most necessary now.

While taking care to "prove all things" let us "*despise not prophecies*" (1 Thessalonians v. 20). In the midst of modern scepticism the ever accumulating fulfilment of the prophecies will be found, next to the "moral and experimental evidence of God's Word," one of the most convincing witnesses to inspiration. But more than this, a heart-knowledge of them has now become essentially needful to save us from complicity with evil, and to comfort us in suffering for the truth. How profitable an acquaintance with special prophecy was found by Caleb and Joshua, Rahab, the Ninevites, the believing Jews in the days of Cyrus, and again in those of Alexander, and at Titus' siege of Jerusalem; and so, beyond doubt, it will be with us, if we know the "scripture of truth" in the "perilous times" upon which we are entering. May the blessing of Israel's God, for the sake of Messiah, rest upon this feeble endeavour to make known His present providential dealings with His ancient people! May every reader be led to search the scriptures of the Prophets, and be awakened to a due concern as to his own individual part in the tremendous events now daily drawing near!



PALESTINE RE-PEOPLED; OR, SCATTERED ISRAEL'S GATHERING.

CHAPTER I.

THE GATHERING OF THE FLOCK.

THE Apostles had a last question to ask their Lord. They appear to have shrunk from putting it before; but now that they were "assembled together" to witness His ascension, and He appeared on the point of departure, they could keep silence no longer. "Lord," they asked Him, "wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?"* No inquiry could be plainer. The Jews had finally lost their liberty and independence shortly after our Saviour was born, when Judæa became a Roman province. "To restore again the kingdom to Israel," therefore, means clearly to reinstate Israel in a position of national freedom and power in their own land. The Apostles, let us distinctly observe, made no interrogation as to whether it was really Jehovah's intention

* Acts i. 6.

to bring about such a restoration. On the contrary, their question implies that Messiah had already satisfied their minds on this subject, and had gloriously confirmed all that they had gathered from Moses and the Prophets. But what they so eagerly inquire about is, plainly, the *time when* this happy and wonderful recovery is to take place. Lord, is it to be *now*? "*Wilt Thou at this time*" bring about the long-promised national restitution?

Our Lord, for wise purposes, declined then and there to answer the question. He turned away their thoughts from temporal power, which was not to be the possession of His Church during this dispensation, to the far more important consideration of that spiritual power with which all who believe in Him were shortly to be endued by the Holy Ghost. "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own right. But ye shall receive power, after the Holy Ghost has come upon you." All of rebuke in this rejoinder has reference only to anxiety for information then as to "times or seasons." But is it possible to suppose that, if their evident hope and expectation of a national restoration were wrong, the Lord would not have seized this solemn opportunity once for all to disabuse their minds of such an error? Who can doubt it? This reply, then, from Him who is "the Truth" itself, implies a deliberate sanction to the grand hope expressed in their words

—a hope which animated all the nation at that day, and to which Israel, through eighteen hundred years of dispersion and ruin, still devoutly cling. Have they not read that in the days of Christ “the Lord shall set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And He shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.”* Has not the Lord declared by the mouth of Jeremiah: “O Israel, . . . though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee. . . . He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock. For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he. Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion. . . . Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will sow the house of Israel, and the house of Judah, with the seed of man, and with the seed of beast. . . . If those ordinances” (sun, moon, and stars, ver. 35) “depart from before Me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before Me for ever. . . . Behold, the days come, saith the

* Isaiah xi. 11, 12; see also Isaiah xxvii. 12, 13.

Lord, that the city shall be built to the Lord from the tower of Hananeel unto the gate of the corner ; . . . it shall not be plucked up, nor thrown down any more for ever.”* And again : “ Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that it shall no more be said, The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt ; but, The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither He had driven them : and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers.”† Has not God thus spoken by Ezekiel : “ Behold, I, even I, will both search My sheep ” (the house of Israel, see verse 2), “ and seek them out. . . . And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land. . . . I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be : . . . And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even My servant David ; . . . And I will make with them a covenant of peace, and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land : and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness, . . . and they shall no more be a prey to the heathen, . . . and they shall be no more consumed with hunger in the land, neither bear the

* Jeremiah xxx. 10, 11, xxxi. 10, 12, 27, 36, 38, 40.

† Jeremiah xvi. 14, 15. See also Jeremiah xxiii. 5—8.

shame of the heathen any more.”* And yet again: “Prophecy therefore concerning the land of Israel, and say unto the mountains, and to the hills, to the rivers, and to the valleys, Thus saith the Lord God; . . . Ye, O mountains of Israel, ye shall shoot forth your branches, and yield your fruit to My people of Israel; for they are at hand to come. . . . And I will multiply men upon you, all the house of Israel, even all of it: . . . and I will settle you after your old estates, and will do better unto you than at your beginnings.”† And yet once more: “I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph, . . . I will bring them again also out of the land of Egypt, and gather them out of Assyria; and I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon; and place shall not be found for them.” ‡

Passages might be multiplied indefinitely, where, after Israel's literal dispersion is foretold, Israel's restoration, in terms no less literal, immediately follows. But for the clue which Israel's future temporal recovery affords, one-half of the Prophets would

* Ezekiel xxxiv. 11, 13, 14, 23, 25, 27—29.

† Ezekiel xxxvi. 6, 8, 10, 11.

‡ Zechariah x. 6, 10; see also Isaiah li. 11—22, lx.—lxii.; Hosea iii. 4, 5; Joel iii. 16, 17; Amos ix. 11—15; Micah iii. 12, iv. 1, 2; Zephaniah iii. 14—20; Zechariah viii. 6—8; Malachi iii. 12. (This last written a hundred years after the restoration from Babylon.) Dr. McCaul's pamphlet, “New Testament Evidence to prove that the Jews are to be restored to the Land of Israel,” is conclusive as to the teaching of our Lord and His Apostles on this subject.

be a sealed book. It is vain to tell us that such "gathering" has already taken place at the time when the Lord turned their captivity in Babylon. For, apart from the altogether partial character of that return, which only included the tribes of Judah and Benjamin and a handful from out the other ten, the deliverance in the days of Cyrus, described by Ezra as "a little reviving in our bondage," could not in any sense be said to fulfil these prophecies.* Can it be alleged that at any former return the Lord brought Israel from the "islands of the sea," "the four corners of the earth," or that at such time the city of Jerusalem was built "never to be plucked up or cast down any more for ever"? Can it be supposed that any restoration which has yet taken place has eclipsed in wonders the miraculous Exodus from Egypt, or that Israel have at any time been reinstated in "their own land" to be "no more a prey to the heathen, neither to bear the shame of the heathen any more"? When have "all the house of Israel, even all of it," been multiplied upon the mountains of Israel: and of what time might it have been said in the wide region of Gilead and Lebanon place could "not be found for them"? The answer to all these questions, with regard to statements made

* Josephus says: "The entire body of the people of Israel remained in that country (where they were carried captive), wherefore there are but two tribes in Asia and Europe subject to the Romans, while the ten tribes are beyond the Euphrates till now, and are an immense multitude, not to be estimated by numbers." (*Antiquities*, l. xi. c. v.)

when Israel's literal return is explicitly foretold, marks the event with which they are connected as one yet to take place.

I have said our Saviour did not at once answer the Apostles' question, but He very graciously sent them a full reply somewhat later by one of their own number. The Revelation solves more than one question put to Christ on earth, which in infinite wisdom He did not think well to answer at the time. For instance, one said, "Lord, are there few that be saved?" The only reply then vouchsafed was, "Agonise to enter in;" *i.e.* be less concerned with the statistics of the heavenly kingdom than with your own place in it. But an answer was given by and by. In the seventh chapter of the Revelation, after "a door was opened in heaven," we read that John "beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and peoples, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands." So we learn that the number of the saved is not few, but countless. Thus, also, with regard to the time when the kingdom was to be restored to Israel. In the Revelation a long series of events, including a period of 1,260 prophetic days, *i.e.* years, are declared to intervene between the era of John and that of the final deliverance of Israel and the Church.* In the history there given,

* Revelation xi., xii. 14.

extending from the days of St. John to "the end of the world,"* by means of a series of symbols, the marks of the time when the kingdom is to be restored to Israel are made known, and in such a way as to become increasingly distinct as that time approaches.

The great importance of the day in which we live arises from the very general agreement amongst commentators who take the historical view of prophecy, that the period of 1,260 years is now fast expiring, if it has not already expired. At its termination the Jews are, we read, to return, before their conversion, to their own land, in very considerable numbers.

It may be asked, are there any signs as yet of the commencement of this momentous event? A residence of some years in the Holy Land, and an intimate acquaintance with what is now passing there, leads me unhesitatingly to answer that such there are. The last four or five years have witnessed a return of the Jews to Palestine from all parts, but more especially from Russia, which has been altogether unprecedented. The Hebrew population of Jerusalem is now probably double what it was some ten years ago. Accurate statistics on this subject it is impossible to obtain, since Eastern Jews dread a census from superstitious reasons, and also

* *συντέλεια τοῦ αἰῶνος* (Matthew xiii. 39, 40, xxiv. 3); literally, "the folding together or completion of the age," i.e. the dispensation in which we live.

from fear of having to pay more by way of poll-tax to the Turk if their true numbers were known. For these reasons, and especially the latter, their official returns on the subject are not reliable. In 1872 and 1873 such numbers came to reside in Saphed, one of the four holy cities of the Jews in the mountains of Galilee, that there were no houses to receive them, and building was for a considerable length of time carried on all night, as well as all day—this, be it remembered, in the East, where “the night” is emphatically the time “in which no man can work!” Great accessions still continue daily; and whereas ten years ago the Jews were confined to their own quarter in Jerusalem, the poorest and worst, they now inhabit all parts of the city, and are always ready to rent any house that is to be let. Notwithstanding this happy change, want of accommodation still being felt, building societies have been formed, and many of their simple tenements are now rising outside the city to the north-west. Even before these many Jewish houses had been built in two little colonies outside the Jaffa Gate. Moreover, the Jews in Palestine are certainly acquiring possession of landed property in the villages and country districts. I have said it is very difficult to ascertain accurately the present number of Jewish inhabitants. I can but express an opinion on the subject, based, however, upon my own observation, and also upon the result of numerous inquiries on the spot, made amongst unprejudiced Jews.

I believe the Hebrew population of Palestine proper must now be stated at 80,000, of whom more than half reside in Jerusalem. This is without reckoning the Jews of Sidon, Beyrout, and Damascus, all within the limits of the Land of Promise, probably some 7,000 or 8,000 more. From the latest government statistics, it is true, the number of Jewish houses in Damascus is only 615, and in Beyrout 60. Anyone unacquainted with the East would be at a loss to understand how so small a number of houses as they appear to occupy could contain so many. But such surprise ceases when we know that the Jews, in common with most dwellers in the towns of Syria, live on an average five in each small room. Their beds—the beds of Scripture—are simply slight mattresses, laid on the floor at night, and rolled up to be deposited in the corner of the chamber during the day. It is well to bear in mind these simple facts. They account at the present time for a population beyond that which any one unaccustomed to the East would suppose possible. They also go far, in a very practical way, to reconcile Josephus' much discredited statements as to the enormous crowds that were in Jerusalem at the time of its destruction by the Romans. To some a population of 80,000 may seem comparatively a slender number ; still, it assumes a real importance when we consider the circumstances of Syria. This return is to a country ruined and depopulated, and where those who now form the great bulk of the people—the

Muslim Arabs—are entirely ignorant, and in every way unfit to form a dominant body. The Jews, therefore, are at this moment in considerably greater numbers than any other civilised nation in the Holy Land.

Three causes, of which I believe little cognisance has yet been taken in England, have, in the providence of God, mainly contributed to bring about this marked return to the Land of Promise: first, new land laws affecting Palestine; secondly, new laws of military service in Russia; thirdly, new civilisation throughout the East.

CHAPTER II.

THE WAY PREPARED.

THE passing of new land laws directly affecting Palestine must be placed first amongst the causes mainly conducive at this time to Israel's return. It has often been asked, Why have not the wealthy Jews purchased back the possession of their forefathers? It has long been, comparatively speaking, empty of inhabitants. The "great forsaking in the midst of the land" * during the past three hundred years of Turkish misrule has fatally progressed. Its price, too, some few years ago, owing to the great and increasing poverty of the private owners, was almost nominal. Probably one wealthy Hebrew family was itself alone possessed of means sufficient to have bought the greater part of the soil. Cherishing, as we know, an undying desire to return, how came it that they failed to do so? The answer is simple. They could not, until quite recently, have acquired a legal title to a single *dunem*† of land with-

* Isaiah vi. 11, 12.

† The Arabic acre, which is less than ours.

out becoming Turkish subjects. As the law formerly stood, none but *rayahs*, or subjects of the Porte, could hold real property in any part of the Ottoman empire. Now Turkish corruption and misrule is a very terrible affair, even to the favoured Muslim population. But for a Jew to have become a *rayah* in this, the worst-governed province of the Porte, would have been at once to lose all protection to life and property. No English, German, Russian, or indeed any other European Jew, could therefore reasonably entertain the project.

It is true that by a legal fraud some lands were acquired, even in those days, the purchase being made in the name of a Turkish subject, commonly some man of straw, who then secretly conveyed the property to the real purchaser. This was not recognised by law, and the legal estate continued to be vested in the *rayah*. Some nine years ago, however, a most important alteration took place. In June, 1867, an Imperial Rescript (*Hatti humaiun*) gave to all subjects of foreign powers a right to purchase landed property in their own name. It was a part of that marked improvement in the position of foreigners in Turkey, the commencement of which dates from the time of the Crimean war. How great the change in this instance may be best understood when we remember, that it was only six years ago it was thought prudent to give this privilege to aliens even in free and enlightened England.

.

No sooner was the law passed, than many began to avail themselves of the right, and plots of ground for building were purchased in and around the principal towns of Palestine. At first, men found it hard to believe that safe possession would be guaranteed, and that those, who but a few years before were greeted in the public streets with opprobrious names and shameful ill-treatment, would be allowed by the haughty Muslimin to become in peace the lords of the soil. But as time wore on, and one villa and cottage after another arose outside the walls of Jerusalem, where the owners lived in safety, new confidence was inspired, and more became desirous of possessing a portion of the sacred ground. In the country districts whole villages, with lands around them to the extent of over 3,000 *dunems*, have been bought—lands which, though unmanured from year to year, unimproved in any way, and cultivated with the least possible amount of labour, are immensely productive.*

I made careful inquiries, when residing in Jerusalem in the year 1873, and have reason to believe there were at that time no less than thirty European Jews and others farming lands in Palestine, though the number must now be much greater. One man had then an interest in the lands of as many as fifteen different villages. Not all of these, indeed, possessed the properties in their own right. The plan then mostly adopted was for the European to enter into a

* See Appendix B.

kind of partnership with the villagers. The terms of this temporary partnership I have heard stated as follows :—The European engaged to meet the Government, pay the proper taxes, defend the villagers from the extortion of the Turkish officials, and supply seed with which to sow the land. In return, the villagers on their part undertook to supply cattle and beasts of burden, to furnish all implements of agriculture, &c., to give all the labour, to recoup the European half the taxes, and then to give him a large share of the harvest, when all was duly threshed and winnowed. Nothing could better illustrate the ruin of the provincial families, and the terrible and systematic extortion to which they must be exposed at the hands of the tax-gatherers, when dealing with them without European intervention, than the fact that they were willing to make such an arrangement. No doubt, in the present more prosperous condition of affairs a contract quite so favourable to the European could not be made ; but it will readily be seen that the Jews possessing consular protection, would not be slow to avail themselves of such an easy and profitable business, giving them, as it does, positions of no little consequence in all the districts with which they become thus connected. The only drawback is the dishonesty of the *fellahin*, the country people, which renders it absolutely necessary that those interested in the harvest should still, as it seems they had to do in the days of Boaz, remain during “ingathering”

day and night by the threshing-floors.* The fact that farming can thus be carried on, where the profits of farming are beyond anything that could be understood in this country, cannot fail to attract many Jews to the land of their ancestors, and provide occupation for thousands of their poorer brethren, who, having lived in the East, speaking Arabic, and knowing the ways of the people, are well fitted to act as *wakeels*, or agents. Already land in the neighbourhood of several towns has enormously increased in value. To my knowledge one plot of ground close to Jerusalem was sold, three years ago, for twenty times the sum which was paid for it by the owner. This increase in value has arisen in a great measure in consequence of the right of foreigners to purchase real property.

In the second place, new laws of military service in Russia, coming into operation shortly after the promulgation of the new real property laws in Palestine, have greatly tended to lead Israel's weary steps back to their own land. Formerly in that vast country they were not, as a body, compelled to take arms, but were allowed, if they chose, to pursue their usual peaceful avocations ; now, however, this has all been changed. Russia has been ever since the Crimean war preparing for the next great struggle, and part of that preparation has been the introduction in 1874 of the

* Ruth iii. 1—4.

German scheme of military service, which forces all the Jewish population in her dominions to enter the army. About the year 1827 Russia began to take Jews for soldiers at the rate of five to eight from every thousand, and then even children seven years of age were seized for that purpose. The time of service was twenty-five years, but for those taken young the time was reckoned from the age of eighteen, the previous years being devoted to their training. The reason for taking children of a tender age was to prevent their running away, as many used to do, and also to compel them to embrace the tenets of the Greek Church, for which purpose they were often exposed to much cruel persecution. About 1858, through the intercession of the Empress of Russia, the practice of taking children was abandoned. In 1874, however, Russia adopted the German system, and all Jews throughout the empire are now required to be enrolled and drilled at the age of twenty-one. Israelites are not, as a rule, devoid of courage, as their ancient wars with the Romans well attest; but long years of grinding oppression have told upon them, and rendered them in many parts of the world singularly averse to the calling of arms. They have, therefore, very naturally taken alarm at the terms of the new system, which, for the first time, compels them all to military service. Moreover, they are especially disinclined to fight for Russia. In that country they have suffered much—in common with

all who differ from it—at the hands of the Greek Church. Many persecuting laws have been passed against them, more especially in Poland. Now, in Palestine they are still entirely exempt from service in the army. A trifling poll-tax, amounting, I believe, to about a *mejeedy* (four shillings) a head, is taken from Jews and Christians in Syria in lieu of their liability to conscription. They have, therefore, decided to leave Russia when and how they can. This is not easily managed, for such are the despotic laws of that State, that in many cases their preparation for departure would be a ground for their imprisonment. Still, it is well known in Syria that great numbers of them are now arriving, and they already form a very new element of wealth and influence in the Holy City. During the years 1871-4 every steamer from Russia brought her large quota of Hebrew passengers, and those whose business it was to meet travellers at Jaffa and conduct them to Zion, marked with astonishment the great crowds that came by these ships. This state of things, it is said, still continues. I have myself repeatedly heard from their brethren in Jerusalem, and from Turkish officials in that city, who were in a position to know, that the Russian Jews in a body have, ever since the adoption of the German system of military service in 1874, anxiously sought to leave Muscovite territory, and settle in the Holy Land. They cannot, if they would, escape all at once. The stream of emigration, however, is now slowly but

steadily flowing towards Emmanuel's Land, and will, there is every reason to believe, continue to flow—the more speedily as the dark war-clouds now impending settle down on Europe—till Russia is emptied of a Hebrew population that probably numbers one-third of the whole nation of the Jews.*

But we have yet to notice the influence on this movement of a new civilisation in Syria. Neither the facilities for acquiring land in Palestine, nor the dread of military service in Russia, would have been inducements strong enough to have led back European Jews to the country as it was some thirty years ago. In those days Jerusalem could not be entered save in Eastern costume, the Jews were shut up in their own unwholesome quarter, and it would have been death to live amongst the Turks. No one could venture alone outside the walls of Jerusalem after dark, much less live in any country-house. A Jew of highest position walking through the *Suk* (bazaars) was liable to the grossest insult, for which there could be no redress. For instance, a Turk would take off his shoe, throw it at the poor fellow, and

* The number of Jews scattered throughout the world is variously estimated. It is probably not less than 5,000,000, and not more than 10,000,000. These are descendants of Judah and Benjamin, and of a small sprinkling from some other tribes, who joined the two on their return from Babylon. The ten lost tribes, of whose habitat as a whole we are yet uninformed—only small scattered bodies, such as the Nestorians, Beni Rechab Arabs, Afghans, &c., having been hitherto identified—will, in all likelihood, be found a still larger number. Isaiah xlix. 20, 21.

hailing him as a dog, bid him fetch it, an indignity to which he was bound to submit. Fanaticism, violence, ignorance, and dishonesty had everything their own way. Such was the state of things in the towns. In the country districts the land was wholly uninhabitable for Europeans. The heads of several of the leading native families, such as the once much-dreaded Abu Ghosh, were at the best of times directors of banditti, that infested the mountain districts as highway robbers; and at the worst, ringleaders in wide-spread rebellion, during which the towns were brought into a state of siege. There was not a single road in the country, and when it is added that the Bedawin Arabs at harvest time swept across the unprotected fords of the Jordan, to rob the threshing-floors and levy blackmail, we have a true outline of the terrible picture of ruin presented by Emmanuel's Land at the commencement of this century. Now, the change that has taken place in all this is indeed very striking. Turkish misrule will assuredly remain Turkish misrule to the end of that sad chapter of human history. To its latest hour the Ottoman Empire is called, with awful significance, the "second woe;"* but even the passing traveller can testify how great the contrast between the present state of things and the past.

To understand the new civilisation that is arising in Syria, it will be well to trace the causes which have led to it. The coming of missionaries to reside

* Revelation ix. 12, xi. 14.

in the country, about forty years ago, has doubtless, under God, been the chief of these causes. It can never be too often remarked that Christianity, though concerned, for the most part, in pointing men's thoughts and hopes to a future state, is ever the chief instrument in the amelioration of their condition here. No honest Hebrew acquainted with the modern history of Palestine can fail to know very well, however little he may care to confess it, that the altogether new comforts and privileges he now enjoys are due in no small degree to the work, direct and indirect, of Protestant missionaries, and more especially of the early missionaries to the Jews, if only as being the first in the field. The very presence of these men of God and their families, possessed respectively of the great advantages of English, German, and American training, was a solemn protest against the ignorance and barbarism by which they were surrounded. In Jerusalem itself, that great stronghold of Muslim, Jewish, and Apostate Christian fanaticism, at the peril of their lives they, and they alone, fought out, for the benefit of all alike, the great battle of religious toleration, and openly triumphed. It was the missionaries who, according to the best of their abilities, at once commenced the work of liberal education, totally neglected before, and so carried it on as to compel the Jews themselves to follow in the same path. It was the missionaries, too, who used their utmost endeavours to raise the Hebrew women from that

depth of degradation to which they had been brought by the teaching of the Talmud, and who succeeded so far as to render it absolutely necessary for the most bigoted Jews in Jerusalem to open schools for girls, in order to keep the young people away from the missionary establishments. These messengers of the Gospel were the first to furnish duly trained and able medical men, and to found an excellent hospital, so as in this particular also "to provoke to emulation" the rabbis, whose medical institutions, subsequently founded in rivalry, are now also becoming very efficient, and no doubt a means of much temporal good to many. Further, notwithstanding that they were opposed and persecuted on all hands, their being possessed of some European influence enabled them to act as a kind of "watch committee," to protect the oppressed in all communities alike, helping those to right who suffered wrong, and nowhere more than amongst the cruelly down-trodden race of Israel. Let it be remembered, also, that the thousands of children who have passed through their schools, and even of nominal converts who have joined their churches, have helped in their turn most materially to diffuse the light of Christian education throughout many parts of the land.

Amongst other agencies of civilisation, next to the work of the missionaries, must be enumerated the establishment of Consulates in various towns of Palestine, by which means most of the leading

nations of Europe are now represented. This too has been a very important step. Not only has the presence of these European representatives, many of them diplomatic agents entrusted with considerable powers, been in itself a great check upon the general lawlessness which preceded their coming, but it has rendered it possible for all subjects of their respective nations to live in comparative comfort and safety. Thus no Jew who is the subject of a foreign power can now be arrested save by an officer of his own consulate, or tried before any other court than that of his own consul.

Nor must we omit to mention amongst the causes of the present improved condition of the country, the annual influx of a very great and increasing number of visitors. The entirely new and healthful mode of travelling it necessitates, with all the excitement and pleasure of camp life, the deep interest of its hallowed spots, the wide field it affords for exploration, and the wild beauty that still lingers everywhere on its natural features, combined to make Palestine a place of resort as soon as the modern facilities for travelling brought its shores to within an easy fortnight's distance from our own.* Of late years, from the commencement of December to the beginning of the following May, but more especially during the delightful spring season, crowds have thronged the ordinary pilgrim ways. Royal personages have been

* See Appendix C.

conspicuous among the number.* Formerly only a few very wealthy travellers could accomplish the journey. Now it may be said to be within the reach of ordinary tourists. There are two well-known conductors of travelling parties in England, Mr. Cook and Mr. Gaze, and one in Germany. The first of these repeats his visits four times during a single season, and in that of 1874 made arrangements for no less than 270 visitors to the Holy Land. Such is the number of Germans who annually flock to the country, that within the last two years an additional volume of Baedeker's elaborate series has been published, in the shape of a handbook of travel for Palestine and Syria. American visitors, though they have to come three thousand miles further than others, are, to their credit be it said, the most numerous, and after them our countrymen furnish by far the largest contingent. This is, of course, excepting the Russian pilgrims, members of the Greek Church, who now, together with crowds from the neighbouring countries, representatives of the Greek, Armenian, Syrian, Coptic, and almost all Oriental Churches, come up every year at Easter by thousands, to witness that "lying wonder," the so-called miracle of the Holy Fire,

* I may mention the following names:—H.I.M. the Emperor of Austria, H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh, H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught, H.I.H. the Crown Prince of Germany, H.I.H. the Grand Duke Alexis of Russia, H.R.H. the Prince of the Netherlands, H.R.H. the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg, with several other German Royal Princes.

in the Church of the Sepulchre at Jerusalem. In consequence of the arrival of some of the more distinguished of these travellers, and particularly the royal personages already alluded to, the principal roads have been repaired, and in some cases made anew. The improvements in this direction during the last three years have been very marked. It must be borne in mind that it still is, and always has been, a custom of the East, when any king or prince is about to travel, to send commands to the people of the various districts through which he is to pass to repair the roads. Hence the force of Isaiah lxii. 10, 11 : "Go through, go through the gates ; prepare ye the way of the people ; cast up, cast up the highway ; gather out the stones ; lift up a standard for the people. Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh ; behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him." Here the coming of Christ is foretold, and the spiritual preparation for the advent of Israel's Divine King commanded, under the striking figure of the usual orders issued to prepare the highway for a royal procession. Residents in Jerusalem of late have had frequent and excellent opportunities of observing the prophet's meaning, and have learnt to look forward eagerly to the coming of some royal visitor, if for no other reason, on account of the great improvement immediately made in the roads by which it is supposed he will travel. Again,

some who have visited the country have come to stay, and amongst others most notable, are the highly respectable members of the German community known as "The Society of the Temple," also called familiarly "The Hoffmannites," from their leader Dr. Hoffmann. These, a band of piously-disposed Germans, to the number of about a thousand, have in the last few years settled as colonists, principally at Jerusalem, Jaffa, and Haiffa, where, as tradesmen, mechanics, and domestic servants, they have helped most materially to improve the condition of the country. They believe that in thus coming they are fulfilling prophecy. God's future revealed purpose for Palestine is, according to their interpretation, that it should be colonised by Christians from out of all nations, who will finally build a temple at Jerusalem. Their tenets are in many respects peculiar, and their views of the Gospel defective. For instance, they do not administer the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper in their public assemblies; neither do they engage in any aggressive missionary work, believing that their duty is simply to exhibit, amidst prevailing darkness, a life of Christian morality. At present this body, with the exception of a few Jewish proselytes, consists only of Germans, drawn mostly from the worthy peasantry of Wurtemberg.

All these influences, as may well be supposed, have not been at work in vain. They have modified the

whole character of life in Palestine, and have rendered the country in every way more civilised, and fit for the residence of Europeans. Particulars without number might be given of these improvements, but I will mention only a few. First, then, the fortress-like character of several of the towns has ceased. During the early part of my residence in Jerusalem the gates of the city were all shut at sunset, and were not opened, except to the privileged possessor of a special pass, until the next day. This highly inconvenient practice came to an end some five years ago. In answer to the petition of the numerous European residents, the Jaffa, or *Khulil* gate, was thrown open all night, by order of the Pasha, notwithstanding the angry remonstrances of bigoted Muslimin, and has remained open ever since. So great, indeed, is the change in this respect at Jaffa, that, by command of the Governor, the massive town wall, an extensive fortification, has within the last few years been pulled down, and some of the stones were bought, as building material for a new school-house in connection with Miss Walker-Arnett's excellent work. Shops have of late sold European commodities; so that some of the comforts and luxuries of Western life may now be procured. Formerly, no vegetables or fruits, beyond a few native productions, could be procured. Some twenty years ago, however, horticulture—once, as we may gather from constant Scriptural allusions, a great feature of life in Palestine—began to be revived

by a Jewish proselyte, at a little valley, *Wady Urtas*, some six miles south of Jerusalem. Taught by his success, the Arabs who possessed irrigated gardens have taken to similar cultivation, and now Jerusalem has a most abundant and cheap supply of excellent fruits and vegetables. It may be mentioned that the cultivation of the olive too, in ancient times perhaps the chief source of wealth in the Holy Land, is receiving new attention, and in the neighbourhood of Bethlehem wide tracts of hitherto waste lands have been planted, and carefully enclosed with stone walls. The great decline of Turkish fanaticism, due doubtless, in no small degree, to the decline of Turkish power, must not pass unnoticed. Both Jews and Christians of all denominations can now reside, as I have said, without inconvenience in the Turkish quarter of Sion. Nor is this all. If men of position in their own communities, they are actually called by the Muslimin *Effendi*, and are treated with every mark of great respect. I am well aware that in Muslim towns like *El Khulil* (Hebron), *Nablous* (Shechem), and those parts where Europeans are yet unknown or few in number, a very different state of things still exists, but the change in this regard in Jerusalem and Jaffa forms a marked feature of the new amenities of more civilised life.

But perhaps there is no better illustration of the improved order of affairs, than the recent organisation amongst the Jews in Jerusalem of as many as

three of those modern institutions called "Building Societies." An interesting account of these has been lately presented by that venerable and distinguished pilgrim, Sir Moses Montefiore, in a little book giving an account of his journey to Palestine in 1875, the seventh time he has visited the Holy Land.* I differ most widely from many of the statements made in this work. Those who have lived in Jerusalem, and laboured earnestly for its spiritual and temporal improvement, cannot doubt how sad is the condition of Israel from many points of view. Here Talmudism flourishes, and may well be judged by the fruit it bears, Jews themselves being the witnesses. Nowhere is the saying of Isaiah still so true, "O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths,"† as in the once Holy City. How far Rabbinism, so justly styled "Jewish Popery," can degrade and demoralise a highly-gifted race, may, alas! be plainly witnessed in Sion, amongst God's beloved but now blinded people. But when so high an authority as Sir Moses Montefiore gives statistical statements, we shall find ourselves, no doubt, on firm ground. He says in one place: "In the evening I received an invitation from the Building Committee of the little colony called *Meah Shearim* (Hundred

* "An Open Letter addressed to Sir Moses Montefiore, Bart., on the day of his arrival in the Holy City of Jerusalem . . . together with a Narrative of a Forty Days' Sojourn in the Holy Land." London: Wertheimer, Lea & Co. 1875.

† Isaiah iii. 12.

Gates), to lay the foundation-stone of a new row of houses. 'The Company,' they said, 'on whose behalf we crave the honour of your presence, numbers now 120 members. . . . The object is to build every year not less than ten houses, which, on completion, are to be allotted to ten members. The Company was established but two years ago, and there are already twenty houses built and inhabited. There will be a synagogue, college, and school, likewise a public bath in the centre of the square, and a very large cistern for the supply of water.' On my inquiry whether they were the only Building Society in Jerusalem, they replied, 'No, there are two others: one bears the appellation of *Eben Yisrael* (Stone of Israel), and numbers forty-five members. . . . They build every year not less than six houses, and are expecting, at the expiration of seven years everyone of the members to have his own house. The society was established in the month of Iyar, 5,635 (1875), on the same principle as the *Meah Shearim*. The other Building Society, called *Beth Yacob* (House of Jacob), numbers seventy members. . . . They propose building every year not less than ten houses. Their property is situated near that of *Meah Shearim*, so that altogether there will be 235 of our brethren, in a few years, proprietors of most comfortable houses in a very salubrious locality outside the city" (pp. 106, 107). In another part of this book we read of a further deputation, who "communicated their intention

of securing land for the building of eighty houses, a synagogue, Beth Hamidrash (college), and a public bath. They had already, they said, decided to purchase for that purpose a plot of ground near the city wall, measuring 26,000 builder's yards" (pp. 134, 135). In the conclusion of the book, after an earnest appeal to his co-religionists to assist their brethren in Palestine, to which he supposes them to answer, "What scheme do you propose?" occurs this remarkable passage: "I would reply, carry out simply what they themselves have suggested, but begin, in the first instance, with the building of houses in Jerusalem. Select land outside the city; raise, in the form of a large square or crescent, a number of suitable houses, with European improvements; have in the centre of the square or crescent a synagogue, a college, and a public bath. Let each house have in front a plot of ground, large enough to cultivate olive-trees, the vine, and necessary vegetables, so as to give the occupiers of the houses a taste for agriculture. . . . If the amount of your funds be sufficient, build houses in Safed, Tiberias, and Hebron, on the same plan, . . . and should you further prosper, and have £30,000 or £50,000 to dispose of, you will, without difficulty, be able to purchase as much land as you would like in the vicinity of Safed, Tiberias, Hebron, Jerusalem, Jaffa, and Haifa. And you will find in all those places a number of persons, who would be most willing to follow agricultural pursuits.

And if now you address me, saying, Which would be the proper time to commence the work, supposing we were ready to be guided by your counsel? my reply then would be, Commence at once; begin the work this day if you can" (pp. 146—148).

Yet one more instance of this new civilisation must be considered, the most significant and remarkable of all, viz. the Ordnance Survey of Palestine. This important work, in preparation for "Israel's Gathering," was commenced simply as a matter of scientific research, in aid of Biblical criticism, by the Palestine Exploration Fund, in the autumn of 1872. So ably and energetically has it been carried out by Lieut. C. R. Conder, R.E., and those associated with him, that, but for a painful check the work received in the savage assault on the party last year in Galilee, and the threatened outbreak of cholera, it would now be complete.* As it is, the greater part of the task, one of no common danger and difficulty, has been most successfully accomplished. It is impossible to overestimate the interest and importance of this noble work. On an average, in every part of the country, seven names have been added for every one that is to be found in Van de Velt's map, the best hitherto published. Every village, ruin, mound, sacred tree,

* The memory of Mr. Charles F. Tyrwhitt Drake must ever be honourably associated with this grand work, in which he laboured until, borne down by its hardships, he died at his post in Jerusalem, June 23, 1874, resting in Christ's salvation, to a saving knowledge of which he had been recently brought.

or heap of stones that bears a name, has been carefully set down on the scale of one inch to a mile. Every valley and hill is here, for the first time, in its true position. In a word, a survey of all Palestine, from "Dan to Beersheba," in some ways more complete than the Ordnance Survey of our own country, will probably be achieved before the summer of next year.* In crowded England this survey was one of the latest results of many hundred years of progress. In desolate, empty, ruined Palestine, it has pleased God to give it at the very outset. I do not now speak of the immense interest of this enterprise as tending to elucidate and confirm the Scriptures; but regarding it simply as a clear and remarkable preparation for Israel's return and re-settlement in their own land, I cannot fail to see in it the "finger of God." The whole work of both the English and American Palestine Exploration Funds, and of the many individual *savans* and explorers—English, German, French, Austrian, and Italian—who have during the last few years been reverently gazing on her ruined stones, and digging amidst her dusty heaps, must vividly recall the prophetic note of time given by the Psalmist: "Thou wilt arise, Thou wilt compassionate Zion, for the season to be gracious

* What is being done on this side of the Jordan by Englishmen has been commenced on the other by an American Palestine Exploration Society, which has already taken the field, and it may reasonably be hoped will soon accomplish a survey of the inheritance of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, together with other districts.

to her, for the set time has come. For Thy servants have been well pleased with her stones, and they will be gracious to her dust" (Psalm cii. 13, 14).*

The feeling seems everywhere abroad that the time has at last arrived to restore the desolations of Zion, and to rebuild the waste places of the land of Israel. The very existence of "The Syrian and Palestine Colonisation Society," which is but a year old, constitutes a striking expression of such a sentiment. This society, according to its prospectus, has "been formed to promote the colonisation of Syria and Palestine, and the neighbouring countries, by persons of good character, whether Christians or Jews." This it proposes to effect by obtaining information for intending settlers, and making arrangements for their transport and reception ; by assisting approved applicants with advances ; and by making arrangements for the purchase of land by the emigrants, or securing suitable tracts of Government waste lands under certain guarantees ; and by exerting themselves to improve the communications. Having mentioned this association, let me plainly say, from an intimate experience of this matter, that there are at present a variety of reasons why emigration to Palestine by English people cannot possibly be undertaken with

* It should also be remembered that the route to the interior has in 1875 been specially surveyed for a railway, which it is proposed to construct from Jaffa to Jerusalem. This would doubtless be immediately followed by a coast line through the plains of Philistia, connecting Jaffa with Cairo.

any hope of success, in the same way as emigration to the United States or to a British colony. In the first place, the heat in the plains is too great to admit of their labouring during summer with their own hands. The German colonists in attempting this have suffered a fearful mortality. Again, to employ Arab labour to advantage, and to hold any dealings with the people, the peculiar manners and customs of the East must be known, and colloquial Arabic to some extent be mastered. But, above all, the want of thorough protection to life and property, so long as Palestine remains in Ottoman hands, is greatly against any emigration scheme that does not include European government for the whole colony. Hence the evident wisdom in such a case of the plan put forth by Captain Charles Warren, R.E., in a pamphlet, published last year, entitled, "*The Land of Promise, or Turkey's Guarantee.*" This officer, who has an intimate acquaintance with Syria, derived from his able work there on behalf of the Palestine Exploration Fund, proposes that, if only as a solution of the pecuniary embarrassments of the Porte, Palestine should be handed over to a company similar to the old East India Company, to be farmed and governed by such an association for a period of twenty years. He suggests that such company should pay to Turkey its present revenues, and to the creditors of Turkey a proportion of the interest due to them, taking for itself six per cent. on its capital, and expending the remaining

revenue in improving the country. What he considers the ultimate future of the land we learn from his own words. "Let this" (the above arrangement), he says, "be done with the avowed intention of gradually introducing the Jew, pure and simple, who is eventually to occupy and govern this country. Let the Jew find his way into its army, its law, its diplomatic service. Let him superintend the farming operations, and work himself on the farms. I do not say let him find his way into the mercantile community, into the trades, for he is there already." When Captain Warren penned this pamphlet, such an ultimatum, save to the patient student of prophecy, seemed indeed remote. Recent events, however, have entirely changed the face of affairs, and now that to Turkish bankruptcy has been added an awful outbreak of Turkish barbarity, the crisis has come, and the dread settlement of the Eastern question can, it is felt on all hands, no longer be delayed. Concerning what that settlement is in part to be, I can profess no doubt, because I feel none. It is written over and over again in the Word of God. When "the river Euphrates," the symbol of the Turkish power, is dried up, it is that "the way of" the Jews, "the kings of the East, may be prepared." * Israel are to return to their own land. This event, in its incipient stage, I have shown to be now actually taking place. That which is yet to be looked for is the public recognition

* Revelation xvi. 12.

of the fact, together with the restoration, in whole or part, of Jewish national life, under the protection of some one or more of the Great Powers. And what then? For what purpose is the Lord about to bring back His ancient people at this time to their own land? The solemn answer to this question, furnished so plainly in the Scriptures, must form the next point in our consideration of "Israel's Gathering."

CHAPTER III.

THE SHEPHERD'S PURPOSE IN THE GATHERING.

It is strange that in a Bible-loving land there should be any need to offer an apology for distinct views on the subject of prophecy. In the minds of most Christians in our day there is, however, a strong feeling that a diligent and systematic study of the prophetic word is not necessary, and that the whole of this portion of Scripture is at best dim and uncertain. Against both these misconceptions it is right that we should strongly protest. The neglect of a prayerful and earnest study of the prophets led to Israel's rejection of Messiah at His first coming. This must be apparent to every believing reader of the New Testament, but Paul states it plainly. He says, "For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew Him not, *nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every Sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning Him.*"* Was there any indistinctness as to the greater part of the prophecies concerning the Saviour's first coming? What could be more explicit, amongst a great number of other

* Acts xiii. 27.

particulars, than the mention of the town where He was to be born? * the manner of His wondrous birth? † the scene of His earthly home and principal labours? ‡ His riding into Jerusalem on an ass? § the price of His betrayal, and the purchase made with it? || the awful details of the crucifixion, as given in Isaiah liii. and Psalm xxii., details so minute and literal as the piercing of His hands and feet, the parting of His garments, and the casting lots upon His vesture? Take, too, for example, what may be called the mathematical accuracy with which the Holy Spirit, speaking by Daniel, fixes the time of Messiah's first coming to the very year. ¶

Is it not, then, altogether inconsistent with all we believe of Christ's first advent, to deny that we can or ought to understand the prophecies concerning the events of His second coming; and do we not thus establish the very argument of modern Jewish unbelievers, that prophecy is not to be taken literally? Let the Church of God never forget Peter's inspired admonition on this subject. He has been speaking of the genuineness and authenticity of the Christian revelation, declaring in proof that he with others was an eye-witness of Jesus'

* Micah v. 2.

† Isaiah vii. 14.

‡ Isaiah ix. 1.

§ Isaiah lxii. 11.

|| Zechariah xi. 12, 13.

¶ Daniel ix. 24-26. It has been well said: "If the shame and rejection have been minutely fulfilled, so shall the glory and future welcome of Him; if the humiliation has been literally realised, so shall the coming kingdom."

majesty on the Mount of Transfiguration, and there actually heard the voice of the Father proclaim Him as the Son of God. But he immediately adds a confirmation stronger even than this: "We have also a *more sure word of prophecy*." The study of which may be safely neglected? Oh, no: "Whereunto *ye do well that ye take heed*." Which is dim and misty, and impossible to be understood? Very far from this: "Whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a *light that shineth in a dark place*, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts." *

But having stated this, it should also be remembered that prophecy presents only the outlines, clear and well marked, it is true, but still only outlines of those future events which for our warning, encouragement, and instruction, it has pleased God to make known. All the details of the picture are not given; enough that its salient points are shown. Even these, since it is not the Lord's purpose that they should be revealed to the careless and unbelieving, are often closely veiled in symbolical disguise, and widely scattered over the Word. In order to distinguish the literal from the figurative, and to learn the order of time in which the predicted events are to occur, the two chief difficulties of prophetic research, diligent and prayerful study, is required. The views I am about to advance lay no claim to novelty, but nevertheless they

* 2 Peter i. 19. The "word of prophecy" of ver. 19 is the "prophecy of Scripture" of ver. 20, and hence plainly the inspired written predictions of the Bible.

cannot be too often or too plainly declared at this time. In the course of these remarks, however, I hope to be able in a great measure to reconcile the views of the two principal schools of prophecy—the Historical and the Futurist—and thus to establish the truth of the general conclusions of both with regard to the “time of the end.” This will tend to remove one great stumbling-block to the study of prophecy, the popular supposition that the views of commentators on this subject are hopelessly at variance.

Bearing these things in mind, let me plainly reply to the question, “For what purpose is the Lord now leading Israel back to Palestine?” I answer:—

I. For the infliction of a terrible and final judgment.

II. For their conversion as a nation, and their complete and glorious restoration to the Land of Promise.

First, Israel are to be gathered for the suffering of the severest punishment. Humanly speaking, this seems, no doubt, highly improbable, for now, after eighteen hundred years of bitter persecution and wrong, they are everywhere beginning to receive kindly and even honourable treatment. In England and Germany they may at length occupy high official stations and a fair position in society. In Roman Catholic Austria they have lately risen to political influence and importance; while in Rome itself the Ghetto has been thrown open, and they are absolutely free. Even in

the Holy Land, as I have already shown, the iron heel of the Turk has been raised, and it would almost appear as if Jerusalem is ceasing to be "trodden down of the Gentiles." The civilisation of the nineteenth century seems to have ushered in an era of peace for the "tribe of the wandering foot and weary breast." But let us be assured that this peace is a false peace. Israel have not, as a nation, repented. In their hearts they reject King Messiah, and still spit at the mention of that name which bespeaks Him their Saviour. There is no sure or lasting peace out of Christ, and Israel have yet to learn this. Though they may at present see cause for great rejoicing, it will fare no better with them under a tolerant than under an intolerant age. They will find the present seeming calm only the lull before the storm. Their sufferings hitherto have been the heritage of that awful curse they pronounced on themselves and their descendants, when they cried, "His blood be on us and on our children." There is, therefore, every probability that the longer they continue in wilful unbelief, and thus daily add to their guilt, the greater must be the severity of the judgments sent to awaken them. But this matter has been taken altogether out of the region of probability, however great, for it has been plainly predicted. A few passages only can be noticed, but they will suffice, if carefully considered, to make this apparent. Speaking by the mouth of Jeremiah, the Lord declares, "Lo, the days come, that

I will bring again the captivity of My people Israel and Judah; . . . and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers." Then in the next verse but one we learn what is to follow: "We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace. Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child? wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness? Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble."* In the twenty-second chapter of Ezekiel we have a dark picture of Israel's impiety, followed by a threatening of their long dispersion: "I will scatter thee among the heathen, and disperse thee in the countries, and will consume thy filthiness out of thee." But even this long discipline will not be sufficient, therefore we read in the following verses: "Because ye are all become dross, behold, therefore I will gather you into the midst of Jerusalem. As they gather silver, and brass, and iron, and lead, and tin, into the midst of the furnace, to blow the fire upon it, to melt it; so will I gather you in Mine anger and in My fury, and I will leave you there, and melt you. Yea, I will gather you, and blow upon you in the fire of My wrath, and ye shall be melted in the midst thereof. As silver is melted in the midst of the furnace, so shall ye be melted in the midst thereof; and ye

* Jeremiah xxx. 3, 5, 6, 7.

shall know that I the Lord have poured out My fury upon you.”* In Daniel we read that, at the “time of the end,” Antichrist, “the wilful king,” “the king of the North,” “shall enter into the glorious land” (Palestine), and “shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas” (the Dead Sea and the Mediterranean Sea) “in the glorious holy mountain” (Mount Zion). “And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be *a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time.*”† In some passages Israel’s gathering would at first sight seem to be wholly for his good; but if we look at the context we shall see in most instances allusions to the unparalleled judgments which will attend that awful time. Take, for instance, the fourth chapter of Micah. In that scripture commencing, “In the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains,” we read that many nations shall come up to join restored Israel, to learn of God, and to worship at Zion; that wars shall cease, and every dweller in the land enjoy peace and prosperity, both temporal and spiritual. But in the very next verses the dark shadow of “the time of Jacob’s trouble” suddenly falls athwart the scene. “Now why dost thou cry out aloud? is there no king in thee? is thy counsellor perished? for pangs have

* Ezekiel xxii. 15, 19—22.

† Daniel xi. 41—45, xii. 1.

taken thee as a woman in travail. Be in pain, and labour to bring forth, O daughter of Zion, like a woman in travail: for now shalt thou go forth out of the city, and thou shalt dwell in the field, and thou shalt go even to Babylon. . . . Now also many nations are gathered against thee, that say, Let her be defiled, and let our eye look upon Zion." Alluding to the same time, as the whole context shows, the prophet Zechariah declares, "And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off, and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: . . . Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity."* In these scriptures we see the Jews, after their long banishment, again in their own land, and "*in all the land.*" Not all the nation, however, for we read afterwards, as will be presently shown, of a much greater "gathering," or rather a second stage of the same "gathering" on a much greater scale. There is no hint of anything miraculous attending this first partial restoration. It appears to

* Zechariah xiii. 8, xiv. 1, 2; see also Isaiah li. 17—23, lix. 1—18; Ezekiel xx. 32, xxi.; Joel ii.; Zephaniah i.

be simply a gradual re-settlement of a part of the people in their land, permitted or carried into execution by the powers that be, and arising out of the political necessity of the times. In this respect, it closely resembles the restoration from Babylon in the days of Cyrus. But this return, and the judgments which are seen to follow so closely upon it, cannot be accommodated to any former state of things, for at the close of the tribulation described in the above passages all Israel are represented in each case as saved, and entering upon a long future of glorious and unbroken prosperity.

And here the questions arise, How soon after they are restored to their land will these terrible events happen? and by whose instrumentality will they be brought about?

To answer the first of these questions, as in all other cases of chronological prophecy, we must refer to the prophet Daniel. Strange it is that the Jews have set this wonderful book amongst the Hagiographa at the close of the canon, and deny to Daniel any place amongst the prophets. The truth is, that this portion of Scripture contains a series of the most precise and important predictions to be found in the whole Bible, and we can only account for the conduct of the rabbis in this matter, by believing that it is a part of that judicial blindness which, as it led to ignorance of the signs of Messiah's first advent, will also be permitted

to leave them in darkness as to those of His second coming. In the ninth chapter of Daniel we learn that, after he had discovered by diligent and prayerful study the approaching expiration of the seventy years' captivity foretold by Jeremiah, he earnestly implored the Lord to pardon Jerusalem, and upon this his faith was rewarded by the revelation of a further prophetic period of seventy sevens, or weeks of years, which should lead to a better deliverance than that from Babylonian bondage, viz. salvation from sin and death by Messiah the Prince, when He should make an end of sins, reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in everlasting righteousness, by the sacrifice of Himself.* With the first two periods of seven weeks, and sixty-two weeks, we are not now concerned, more than to remark that they must long ago have passed away. But the last of these seventy weeks is plainly separated from the rest by an indefinite interval, and it has long been the opinion of judicious commentators that this refers to the time of the end. In verse 26 we have the death of Christ, the destruction of the Temple, and the long Jewish desolation that then intervenes. Afterwards we read of what shall befall in that final separated week, or seven years, at the close of the times of the Gentiles, when a covenant (with regard to the land) is again made with Israel: "And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause

* Daniel ix. 24—27.

the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate" (ver. 27). To use the language of Mr. Bickersteth, "This week is divided into two parts. The character of the first half week seems to be set out (Isaiah lxvi. 1—3), where the Jews are represented as, in a self-righteous spirit, rebuilding the Temple and offering sacrifices ; and the character of the second half or dividing of the week answers to Isaiah lxvi. 4—6, where they are represented as under the terror of the infidel Antichrist, who causes the sacrifice to cease ; and at the close is the consummation in the destruction of that Antichrist, as set before us in Isaiah x. 23—35 ; 2 Thess. ii. 8."

When their formal restoration is brought about, with what pride and exultation will they re-assemble in the Holy Land ! How they will triumph in their new-found liberty, and revel at last in Gentile worldliness, false peace, and vain confidence ! Something of this brief state may be gathered from Isaiah xxviii. 14, 15 : "Wherefore hear the word of the Lord, ye scornful men, that rule this people which is in Jerusalem. Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement : when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us : for we have made lies our refuge, and under

falsehood have we hid ourselves. . . . Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet.* In the passage already referred to, Isaiah lxvi. 1—10, we have the same picture. The mass of the nation are there seen possessed by a self-righteous, proud, and persecuting spirit.

We read in Ezekiel xx. 32: "That which cometh into your mind shall not be at all, that ye say, We will be as the heathen, as the families of the countries, to serve wood and stone;" and from this it would appear that a part, if not the bulk, of those who return in unbelief fall into Gentile liberalism, superstition, and infidelity.† But with what unexpected swiftness will judgment launch its bolts over this scene of false peace! How soon and how terribly will Israel's hopes be dashed to the ground. Then they will cry, "We looked for peace, and no good came; and for a time of health, and behold trouble"

* That this passage refers to the time of the end we may gather from the continuation of the same subject in the following chapter, where the last siege of Jerusalem, with its terrible and miraculous accompaniments, the destruction of all the nations that fight against Mount Zion, and the conversion of Israel, are narrated in order.

† The whole context shows that this applies to the restoration in unbelief (v. 34—44). There will, however, be a small number, insignificant indeed in comparison with the people at large, truly humble and contrite, and these will meet with bitter persecution at the hands of the great body of their exulting and apostate countrymen. Hence, in Isaiah lxvi. 5, special words of comfort are addressed to this little remnant: "Hear the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at His word; your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for My name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified: but He shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed."

(Jer. viii. 15). Only three and a half brief years of seeming peace in these treacherous, lightning-paced times, and "the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place. And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it. . . . For morning by morning shall it pass over, by day and by night; and it shall be a vexation only to understand the report."*

And now we are naturally led to ask, who, as God's instrument, will inflict this fearful chastisement on His people Israel? Rightly to understand the subject, we must consider, in the first place, by what power they are to be restored. We read in Daniel ix. 26, "The people of the *prince* that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary." Then in the next verse we are told, "And he shall confirm the covenant" (lit. *a* covenant) "with many for one week." Now the person here spoken of as confirming a covenant with unbelieving Israel cannot be Messiah, but must naturally be the last-mentioned "*prince*." This "*prince*" some have supposed to be Titus. We must understand rather the Roman Empire, which under Titus destroyed "the city and sanctuary," A.D. 70. In the expressions, "These great beasts, which are four, are four kings," and, "The ten horns . . . are

* Isaiah xxviii. 17—19.

ten kings that shall arise," it is clear that "king" stands for kingdom.* "Prince" must, I think, be interpreted in the same way. It would appear, therefore, that the Roman Empire in some surviving form will have a hand in the restoration of Israel when they return in unbelief.

And this same power will be Antichrist. There are "many Antichrists," that is, many forms of Antichrist.† The spirit was abroad in St. John's days, but its full development was withheld, as St. Paul tells us, by a power which, for prudential reasons, he did not name in writing, but which, undoubtedly, he had already informed them was that of imperial Rome.‡ None who have carefully read the lucid treatise by the Bishop of Lincoln, entitled "Union with Rome: Is not the Church of Rome the Babylon of the Apocalypse?" can doubt that in popery Antichrist took a palpable form. The brand by which this evil spirit is to be known is given by St. John. "Every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of Antichrist whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world."§ If Antichrist were, as some have supposed, expressly and only a single human being to appear in the end of

* Daniel vii. 17, 24. † 1 John ii. 18. ‡ 2 Thess. ii. 2—9.

§ 1 John iv. 3. Antichrist is also said "to confess not that Jesus Christ is coming (*ἐρχόμενον*) in the flesh" (2 John 7). No doubt the denial and ridicule of the doctrine of the Saviour's personal premillennial coming will be a mark of Antichrist. Both truths, however,

the world, would it have been said by John of his "spirit" "even now already is it in the world;" and again, "Even now are there many Antichrists"? With the Gnostics of St. John's days, who declared Christ's human body was only a phantasm, and that He did not really die upon the cross, the heretical system began; and in the Churches of Rome, Greece, and of the East generally it has been perpetuated and perfected. The doctrine of transubstantiation, or the change of the bread and wine at the Lord's Supper into the actual Body and Blood of Christ, is, as our Protestant Prayer-book well lays down, "against the truth of Christ's natural body."* He who holds this doctrine, if words have any meaning, "confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh," and is part and parcel of Antichrist.† As I do not believe this evil power to reside only in one individual man, so also I do not see any reason for believing that it will be in the future, any more than it has been in the past, openly atheistical. It is true St.

are skilfully inserted in 2 John 7. The emphasis is on *the nature in which* He is to come. To say that He is "not coming in *the flesh*" is virtually to declare that He has not already so come.

* See the black rubric at the close of the Communion Service.

† It has also been well said: "The power of Christ's human sympathy is contradicted by the position assigned in both these systems (Latin and Greek) to Mary. These two false Churches represent Him as not near enough to us, and not loving enough to be approached by us, without intercessors. We must come to Mary in order to come to Christ. So entirely does that false system of Mariolatry and saint worship in both of these Churches dishonour the sympathy of Jesus, and virtually deny His manhood."—*Rev. S. Garratt*, Com. on the Rev.

John says, "He is Antichrist that denieth the Father and the Son,"* but in the very next verse "it is evident in what sense the words are used. St. John proceeds: 'Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father;' plainly intimating that Antichrist would not professedly deny the Father, would not be atheistical, but deny the Father only by implication, because denying the Son."†

But while thus insisting on Papal Rome being the Babylon of the Apocalypse, the Antichrist of St. John's First Epistle, and St. Paul's "man of sin," we must bear in mind the fact that this subtle system of error, though in its nature unchangeable, will shortly assume other forms. Antichrist appears to be identical with "the beast," or "wild beast," which represents a persecuting, apostate power referred to in Revelation xii. to xix. There can surely be no need to show that this "wild beast" must, in keeping with the greater part of Revelation, be symbolical, or that, like almost all the prophecies of this book, it refers to the Gentile nations and the Christian Church, just as the Old Testament predictions have mainly to do with Israel.‡ Taking this for granted, let it be remembered

* 1 John ii. 22. † Rev. S. Garratt's Com. on the Revelation, p. 170.

‡ The Jews are mentioned in this Book, for instance in Rev. xvi. 12, under the figure of "the Kings of the East." Their presence as well as conversion is implied in the Alleluias introduced into the song of the Church triumphant over the fall of Babylon, the first time a Hebrew word occurs in the lips of characters introduced into the Apocalypse (chap. xix). They are seen once more towards the close of the millennium in the "beloved city," Jerusalem (Rev. xx. 9).

that the "beast" appears six times in the Bible, and any right interpretation must consistently account for all its different aspects.

In Daniel vii. we learn that this symbol represents the Roman Empire, the fourth in order of time of the great kingdoms which were to be successively masters of the world, and answers to the iron legs and the ten iron-clay toes of the great image which he had fully explained to Nebuchadnezzar in the second chapter.* The different changes through which this power is to pass are marked by the state and number of its heads and horns. From the explanation given in Revelation xvii. we learn that the seven heads represent seven kings, or forms of its supreme government, of which five were "fallen" or past in St. John's days, one then existed, and another was to come and continue a short space.† It is added, that this seventh form of kingship or government would be so modified as to form an eighth. These five fallen forms of Roman government, we gather from Tacitus, were the king-

Whatever Israel may mean in Rev. vii. 4, it cannot, in consistency with the symbolical character of the Book, signify the literal Israel.

* Daniel vii. 15—17, 23, 24, ii. 37—45.

† The seven heads are also called "seven mountains on which the woman sitteth" (Rev. xvii. 9) to identify the beast with the Roman dominion, Rome in ancient times being known as "the Seven-hilled City." It is so styled by Varro, Virgil, Ovid, Propertius, Martial, and Lucan. But there seems clearly to me a double reference here. JERUSALEM is brought into view along with ROME. It is shown on page 66 that the head-quarters of Babylon or the Romish Church will shortly be removed to Jerusalem, and THIS CITY IS, AND WAS IN FORMER TIMES, ALSO SEATED ON SEVEN MOUNTAINS. See Appendix D.

ship, the consulate, the decemvirate, the military tribuneship, and the triumvirate.* The one existing in St. John's day was the Roman Emperorship. The one to come was to be a revived form of this Emperorship, to continue "a short space," and in turn to give place to a successor described in these remarkable words: "The beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven;" which seems to imply a democratic or republican form of government, retaining an imperial character.† The "ten horns" are said to represent "ten kings" or kingdoms, which are to arise out of the Roman power, weaker in their nature than the empire out of which they spring, as we learn from clay being mixed with the iron toes of Nebuchadnezzar's image.‡ These are plainly the commonwealths of Europe, which rose on the overthrow of Rome in the fourth and fifth centuries by the Gothic nations. Even Machiavel, a Roman Catholic writer, makes out these to be just ten. Schlegel also, a Roman Catholic, in his "Philosophy of History," goes so far as to say they "have always on an average been ten." "In almost every list of the chief interpreters of Revelation Britain is included," and it would appear to have been the last formed of the number, and therefore, perhaps, "the tenth part of the city" of Revelation xi. 13, spoken of as suffering some fearful social revolution in the last times.

* Tacitus, it is true, gives six, but specially says of the Dictatorship that it was only taken as a temporary office.

† Revelation xvii. 11.

‡ Daniel vii. 24, ii. 40—42.

Within the brief limits of this work I can do little more than barely enumerate the six forms of the "wild beast" as follows:—

I. The form given in Revelation xii. 8—17 is that of "a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns (diadems) upon his heads:" representing the Roman Empire not yet separated into ten kingdoms, but still swayed by undivided imperialism. From the "diadem, or jewelled crown," being mentioned, which was first worn constantly by Diocletian, the period, in agreement with the context, is marked as about A.D. 300, known in history as "the era of martyrs."

II. The form given in Revelation xiii. 1, 2, "A beast" (or "wild beast") rising "up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy," is a picture of the same Roman Empire emerging from the waves of wild nations that broke at its fall over imperial Rome. The crowns transferred from the heads to the horns imply the rise to power of the ten European kingdoms, though the nominal imperialism remains in the Emperor of "the Holy Roman Empire," as the Emperor of Germany was called, as successor to the Roman Emperor of the East, up to the year 1806, when he was forced by Napoleon to relinquish the title.

III. The third form of the "wild beast" (identified by the invariable sign of the ten horns) is that in

Daniel vii. 7—27, where we read: "I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things." This is a figure of the rise of the Papacy, *i.e.* a union of supreme world-wide temporal and spiritual power wielded by the Pope or Bishop of Rome, first founded on the seizure of three out of the ten European kingdoms, viz. the Duchies of Spoleto, Ravenna, and Rome, as clearly commemorated in the Papal triple crown. This was to be a "little horn" as to actual temporal dominion, greatly magnifying the character of Episcopacy or overseership, having "eyes like the eyes of man;" making extravagant, blasphemous, and unprecedented pretensions—"a mouth speaking great things;" and "making war with," and trying "to wear out, the saints." * This power

* The same system which is spoken of by the Apostle Paul in 1 Timothy iv. 1—3, and 2 Thessalonians ii. 3, 4, as teaching "doctrines of demigods"—*i.e.* saint worship; "speaking lies in hypocrisy," pretending false miracles, and inculcating lying casuistry; "forbidding to marry," enforcing the celibacy of the priesthood, and unduly exalting the holiness of single life; "commanding to abstain from meats," making fasting according to minute rules, and, as a matter of merit, of absolute necessity; "opposing and exalting himself (the "man-of-sin," the Roman system, so called from its boasted unity) above all that is called God, or that is worshipped," claiming power over all kings and princes, and even on several occasions requiring more honour for the person of the Pope than is given to the wafer bread which is declared to be God Himself; and even sitting "in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God"—*i.e.* in the midst of the Church at large, in one

is said to continue "a time, and times, and the dividing of time," generally allowed to stand for one year, two years, and half a year, or three years and a half, or 1,260 prophetic days, *i.e.* years.* Faber, Elliott, &c., date this period from the Edict of Phocas, A.D. 606 or 607, giving the Pope universal authority over the Church; and Hales from A.D. 620, the date of the Hejira, considering that the Romish and Mahommedan impostures arose at the same time. The year 616, when Jerusalem was taken by the Persians, is another date. But as the time when the Papacy commenced, though approximately known, cannot be referred to any given year, the day of its expiration, until it arrives, must also be uncertain. If 616 be the date, then it expired last year, 1876; if it be 620, then

sense the temple of God (1 Cor. iii. 17), hearing confession as God, dispensing pardon as God, declaring his mediatorial work absolutely necessary to salvation as God, and, lastly, claiming infallibility as God. It is very probable that a still more literal fulfilment of this may be intended, when the Apostasy in its last form will sit by its representatives in an actual temple at Jerusalem, and there put forth similar, and, if it be possible, still more arrogant and blasphemous pretensions.

* The same period, called also "forty and two months," and "1,260 days," occurs, in allusion evidently to the same time, in Revelation xi. 2, 3, Revelation xii. 6, Revelation xiii. 5, where it is variously described as the period of the Holy City being trodden under foot; of the witnesses, the faithful Churches, East and West, prophesying in sackcloth—*i.e.* mourning and distress; and of the time of the "woman," also the faithful Church, continuing in "the wilderness"—*i.e.* obscurity and trouble. Hence the beast in Revelation xiii. 1—2 is identical with that in Daniel vii. 3—37. The former refers to the Roman Empire just before the rise of the Papacy, and the latter to the same empire just after it has appeared.

it comes to an end in 1880. Mr. Garratt, whose able work is entitled to the highest consideration, dates its rise from the Edict of Phocas, and believes that it has already expired in 1867.* At or some time shortly after its conclusion a seven years' covenant is made with the Jews: "the times of the Gentiles" are fulfilled, and their apostasy consummated. The sixth head during these 1,260 years passes away, and the one comes who, when "he cometh, must continue a short space" (Revelation xvii. 10), the Napoleonic dynasty, which arose in the person of Napoleon I., on the renunciation by the Emperor of Austria of the title of Roman Emperor, in 1806, and received a "deadly wound with a sword" first at Waterloo, and finally at Sedan in 1870 (Revelation xiii. 3).

IV. The form in Revelation xiii. 3—8, which is the last-mentioned empire revived in a new and thoroughly democratic form (Revelation xiii. 3, 4, xvii. 11), in which the commonwealths of Europe will be again ten, and will be remarkably united, probably under two Emperors or Presidents of the East and West. This beast will exist along with another "wild beast," with which it is represented as closely associated. The latter is described in Revelation xiii. 11—18, as "coming up out of the earth," the settled and peaceful state of the European commonwealths, "with two horns like a lamb," and

* See Appendix E.

speaking "as a dragon" or serpent. One of these horns is that already noticed—the Papacy; the other is the Greek Church, and will be found described at length with unmistakeable characteristics in Daniel viii. 7—25, from its rise out of one of the four kingdoms into which Alexander's empire was to be divided (Thrace), until its destruction at the Lord's coming.* The union of these two apostate Churches is the ecclesiastical power signified by this second "beast." This ecclesiastical power will give its energetic and successful support to the first or secular "beast" under the form we are now considering, its revived seventh or eighth head, making men reverence and obey it.† Its rise may be dated from the Council of Florence, 1436-9, when John, Emperor of the East, accompanied by the Patriarch of Constantinople and representatives from all the Eastern ecclesiastical bodies, the Nestorians excepted, "assented to canons of union, which, though indignantly rejected by the great mass of the Greek Church, remain to this day unrepealed." These united Churches, at a period after the beast has revived from the wound by the sword, at the close of the 1,260 years during which Protestants are to witness in sackcloth—i.e. the times upon which we are now entering—will make "an image of the beast:" in other words; summon an Œcumenical Council or representation of all Christendom.‡ This council (to be held

* See Appendix F. † Rev. xiii. 11, 12. ‡ Rev. xiii. 12-14, xi. 7-10.

at Jerusalem), unlike that of Florence, will speak—that is, be able to promulgate and enforce its decrees.* In Revelation xi. we learn that its sessions will continue for three years and a half; that the two witnesses, East and West—in a word, Evangelical Protestantism—will die, and the truth be publicly and almost universally betrayed;† that a terrible persecution will arise, the last and worst to which the Church is to be subjected;‡ that the truth will be revived, and the Protestant Churches seduced into this unhallowed union will be recovered from the snare;§ that the persecution will be followed and avenged by terrible social revolutions, in the midst of which the “tenth part of the city,” conjectured to be England, will fall, and upon this, as we might naturally suppose, Turkey, “the second woe,” only maintained by English arms, will cease to be.||

V. Another appearance of the “wild beast” occurs in Rev. xvii., where we have a detailed account of the destruction of Babylon. Here a woman is seen sitting on the beast bearing the scarlet livery of the Papacy, and it is implied that the short-lived union between the Churches of the East and West has come to an end. From this we gather, that during the union of the two Churches, Rome retains the ascendancy up to the moment that she meets her doom at the hands of the

* Revelation xiii. 15.

† Revelation xi. 8—10.

‡ Revelation xiii. 15—17, xiv. 14—16.

§ Revelation xi. 11, 12.

|| Revelation xi. 13, 15, xiv. 17—20.

ten European kingdoms, when the "ten horns shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh and burn her with fire," a fuller account of which is given in the eighteenth chapter. This is to happen during the pouring out of the seventh vial, after the final persecution, and after the Saviour has come into the "air," and gathered His saints, which occurs under the sixth vial.

VI. Yet once more we are called to consider the beast, which has survived the fate of its woman-rider—the Western or Romish apostasy (the destruction of which is described in the eighteenth chapter), and in Revelation xix. is seen under the latest form before final judgment. The ten kingdoms, we learn from Revelation xvi. 19, have given place to the "three parts" into which the city is to be divided under the seventh trumpet. The scene is evidently the last in the drama of this dispensation, for it is that of the coming of Christ at the head of "the armies of heaven," accompanied by all His risen saints.* Babylon is no more, the ten horns are gone. The false prophet, the Eastern Church, "now the sole representative of the once two-horned beast, or united apostasy, appears with the once ten-horned beast in this its last phase, to fulfil the predictions respecting the closing days of the little horn of Daniel viii."

This power in the end, as we shall presently observe, will be especially the enemy of Israel, and

* Revelation xix. 11—16.

attempt "to destroy the mighty and the holy people," then restored to their land,* and here we are shown how it will finally and miserably perish.†

And now, after a somewhat long, but, if we would thoroughly understand this subject, not a needless digression, we may return to the consideration of Israel's sufferings, and ascertain by whom they will be inflicted. The persecutor of the Lord's people during the whole of this dispensation we have seen to be the "wild beast," *the Roman Empire, pagan at the commencement, and afterwards in conjunction with an apostate Christian power;—first the Papacy, then the Papacy and the Greek Church combined, and finally the Greek Church, or false prophet, alone, the Papacy having been already destroyed.* Israel's partial restoration to their land, and final tribulation, must be brought about by this same supreme power. The eighth or democratic head of the beast is now commencing. The cry of "oppressed nationalities" is a favourite one with those who countenance revolutionary tendencies: and they who so madly demand "Ireland for the Irish," and so eagerly seek autonomy for semi-civilised provinces in Turkey, will to-morrow, with much more reason, require "Palestine for the Jews." We have seen from Daniel and the other prophets that the Jews are to be restored in peace for a period of three and a half years, in

* Daniel viii. 24.

† Revelation xix. 17—21.

a Sadducean state of worldliness, unbelief, and apostasy, which will be followed at its close by terrible judgments. This is the opinion of most who hold the futurist views of prophecy. We have also seen that the Church of Rome and the Churches of the East will towards the end enter into union, and will summon an Œcumenical Council. Now, concerning this council we learn many particulars in the eleventh chapter of the Revelation. In the ninth chapter we have the rise of the sixth trumpet, or "Second Woe," which is very generally admitted by commentators holding the "historical" scheme of interpretation, to be the dominion of the Ottoman Turks, following upon the Saracen invasion or first woe. During the continuance of this trumpet we read, under striking symbols, of the Reformation, which closely followed in 1515.* After this we have a reference to the Lord's two witnesses who are to prophesy in sackcloth for 1,260 days or prophetic years, a period we have found answering to the time of the ascendancy of the Papacy, and the persecution and bondage of the woman, or true witnessing Church. But we further read what is to happen during the continuance of the Ottoman woe at the conclusion of the 1,260 years: "And when they (the witnesses) shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies

*Revelation x.

shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. And they of the people, and kindreds, and tongues, and nations, shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth."* These two witnesses are said to be "the two olive trees and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth,"† which leaves no doubt as to their identity. This is fixed in Revelation i. 20, "the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are"—*i.e.* represent or symbolise—"the seven Churches." Paul in the eleventh of Romans uses the figure of an olive-tree as the well-known symbol of a church.‡ Apparently in every instance in which olive-trees and candlesticks are used typically in Scripture they represent the same. These two witnesses, then, must be regarded as those faithful Protestant bodies, East and West, who have been witnessing for God all along the ages, since the rise of the Papacy. Strange and sad as it is to contemplate, there is but one way in which they can be said to die, and that is by abandoning their protest, and publicly renouncing their witnessing character. The place where this is to happen is "the street of the great city, which spiritually is

* Revelation xi. 7—10. † Revelation xi. 4. ‡ Romans xi. 17—24.

called Sodom and Egypt, *where also our Lord was crucified,*" and, therefore, unmistakeably Jerusalem.* Now seeing that there is shortly to be a great Ecumenical Council held, an image or representation of the beast, brought about by the efforts of the united Churches of Rome and Greece, we are forced to conclude that it is at such council they will thus publicly die.†

* It is suggested that the reader, if he has not already done so, should here refer to Appendix D.

† This was to a great extent understood by Mr. Elliott and others, who, followed by Mr. Bickersteth, speak of the death of the witnesses as the refusal of the Bohemians, amongst whom at that time alone the truth appeared to survive, to come when summoned to the Fifth Lateran Council in 1514. At the ninth session of the Council, on May 5, 1514, no Protestants having appeared, "the Pope's appointed orator applied to him then, as if in its proper fulfilment, the prediction 'all kings shall worship him, all nations shall serve him;' adding, '*jam nemo reclamavit, nullus obstitit.*'" From that day to October 31, 1517, the day on which Luther's well-known Theses against indulgences appeared, the date of the Reformation, it is true the period is just three and a half years, and this they take to be the revival after three and a half days. But, apart from the fact that this does not satisfy the time "when they shall have fulfilled their testimony" (Revelation xi. 7, ὅταν τελώσωσι, a *futurus exactus*, indisputably fixing the death of the witnesses to the close of their 1,260 years' testimony) can the refusal or neglect of any one body of Protestant Christians to attend a distinctly Romish Council, where they probably knew they would not get a hearing, be called the death of Protestantism? Had they indeed attended this Council, and in any way publicly given in their submission to its decrees, it might have been so construed. From this act of unfaithfulness, however, they were preserved; and alas! it has been left for their descendants, in our own day, to fulfil the prophecy. Mr. S. Garratt considers that the 1,260 years expired in 1867, and that the time that has since elapsed, and will yet elapse before the Council of Jerusalem, must be allowed for the beast "*to make war against*" the witnesses preparatory to their death. (Revelation x. 7). See Appendix E.

If this conclusion is right, the Council is to last just three and a half years. During its continuance, the lifeless bodies of the Protestant Churches which have ceased to witness for God will, to the joy of apostate Christendom, be exposed, in the persons of their representatives, in the Jerusalem "street" of the Roman "city." Great as was the rejoicing recorded by the Papal annalist Spondanus over the supposed death of Protestantism in 1514, when the Pope and kings of the earth vied with one another in congratulations and mutual presents, still greater will it be on this sad occasion: "And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth." Deeply thankful must we be to learn that this almost universal apostasy will be broken at the close of the Council by the revival of the truth, and the recovery of some who have been thus ensnared; symbolised, as we have seen, by "the spirit of life from God" entering into the witnesses, and their ascension to heaven.*

Now if we pause to compare the two closing periods of prophecy according to the views of the two latest schools of "futurist" and "historical" interpretation, we at once observe that both alike look for their commencement in a *literal period of three and a half years of false peace, connected with the presence in*

* Revelation xi. 11, 12.

Jerusalem, in the one case of certain representatives of the Jewish nation in unbelief, and in the other of the representatives of the apostate Gentile Churches. Surely this is more than a coincidence. Tracing each separate line of prophecy, Jew and Gentile, both alike are found to end in the same period, spent in the same place, and in a like state of apostasy. While this may be taken as a striking confirmation of the accuracy of each separate conclusion, does it not seem also to point to a connection between the two, and throw light on many prophesied events which are to attend that time? Israel, there is every reason to fear, will be ensnared by this new and latest form of evil. It has always been supposed that they will accept Antichrist as their Messiah during the first half of the week, or seven years, in which they are restored to their land, and will suffer tribulation through his instrumentality, during the latter moiety of the time. But Antichrist we have seen to be not so much a person as a system, and that system the one which during this same period will have its seat at Jerusalem.*

The Jews, as a nation, have resisted all former attempts to convert them, but there is much reason

* It is really important to bear in mind that "the Prince" who is to "confirm a covenant" with Israel (Daniel ix. 27) cannot be taken literally, for if so, it must actually be Titus mentioned in verse 26, though more than 1800 years separate the two verses! (see page 47). But if "Prince" be understood here as I have shown "King" in Dan. vii. 17 must be understood, then it evidently refers to the Roman kingdom, and not necessarily to any one person, and all becomes consistent

to believe that they will be won over to what will be regarded as a "reformed Christianity," to use the language of the Hebrew author of "The Genius of Judaism." It is every way to be feared that "philosophy, and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ," * when the liberal tenets of United Christendom reach their height, will have attractions for Israel as a nation, which "the truth as it is in Jesus" has not possessed. Then will those words of our Blessed Lord spoken to the Jews of His day, who resisted His claim, and sought to put Him to death, come literally true: "I am come in My Father's name, and ye receive Me not: *if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.*"† Thus at the close of this dispensation it will be seen that God hath "concluded them all (Jews and Gentiles) in unbelief" (Romans xi. 32).

Those passages of Scripture which directly mention or imply the existence of a temple in Jerusalem at the time of the end, may apply, not to an exclusively Jewish temple, but to one such as M. Salvador, a Spanish Jew, has already proposed in his "Rome, Paris, and Jerusalem." Looking for a New Messianism, as so many of unbelieving Israel in England, Germany, and France now are, he believes that this began in 1806, with "the revival of the Jewish Sanhedrin" at Paris, as he styles the calling together of the Jewish rabbies by Napoleon I. This New Messianism he

* Colossians ii. 8.

† John v. 43.

believes will develop itself, "having Jerusalem for its centre, in which the substance of Judaism shall array itself in the dress of Romanism, adopting much of its outward ceremonial, and retaining nominally all the doctrines both of Christianity and of Romanism, while robbing them of their meaning. The valley of Jehoshaphat is to be covered with an immense temple, the arrangement of which he describes, not built after the pattern in Ezekiel, but constructed for the common worship of the Jew, the Mohammedan, the Greek, the Roman, and the Protestant, an international exhibition of all the religions in the world which agree in acknowledging the Divine mission of Moses. . . . Modern civilisation is the object of his adoration."*

Indeed, this appears in striking accordance with those passages which have been adduced from the Old Testament prophets to show, that Israel when restored will exhibit Gentile worldliness, and will seek to become "as the heathen, as the families of the countries, to serve wood and stone," i.e. fall into Romish and Greek idolatry; and that by a covenant with nominally Christian, though really anti-Christian powers, they will think from nineteenth-century civilisation, and the liberalism of united and apostate Christendom, to obtain the peace and protection so long sought in vain while opposing Christianity. Thus, Isaiah addresses "the scornful men that rule this people in

* Rev. S. Garratt's "Commentary on the Revelation," pp. 328, 329.

Jerusalem," in a passage which has been shown to refer to the first partial restoration of the Jews, as saying, "We have made a covenant with death, and with the grave are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves."* There are, however, thank God, as we have also seen, some amongst their number who, with many from out the Gentile Churches, will solemnly protest against this godless union of nations and creeds, so soon to be brought about at Jerusalem.†

If we consider what is going on at this moment in Palestine and England, how confirmatory it all seems of such a conclusion. The largest body of European Christians in the Holy Land, the German members of the Temple sect, who numbered a thousand some time ago, and are constantly increasing, make no aggressive missionary effort, and are looking forward to the *building of a Great Temple in Jerusalem, to contain a*

* Isaiah xxxviii. 14, 15.

† If this view be right, it will account for the opinion of all the important Christian writers of the first three centuries, called the early fathers, that Antichrist would be a Jew, appear at Jerusalem, and sit there in a temple. In one sense all this will come literally to pass if we regard Antichrist as a united system of false Christianity, representing the Roman world, having its head-quarters in a temple at Jerusalem, presided over by the Papacy, and of which restored Israel will form a part. How striking, in this connection, is the conjecture of Irenæus, who held the above views, that Antichrist's name might be Lateinos, because the Latins then bore rule, and that name contained the number 666 (Rev. xiii. 18).

*new sect of Christians gathered out of all nations and religious bodies.**

Great efforts in our country are being made to prove that the English people are Israelites, descendants of the Lost Tribes. Pamphlet after pamphlet appears on this subject, one of which has reached a circulation of 120,000. Such views tend directly to bring about the same result. Those who hold them urge upon us that it is England's duty, recognising her Israelitish origin, to assert her right to Palestine, and immediately to take it under her protection for the purposes of colonisation on a very extensive scale. Upon this they consider that the Jews will be converted, Christ will come, and the Millennium will commence. But the hopes built on these views proceed on the error of supposing that Israel are to return, not first in unbelief, but as saved and confessing Christ. These recent opinions, which are spreading so widely, because they are so flattering to our national pride as a religious people, are calculated greatly to mislead in the coming time, and to throw Christians off their guard as to the nature of the last apostasy—indeed, almost to lead them to take part in it. Such opinions, I believe, have not the warrant of Scripture, and tend altogether “*to confound the distinct situation of Jews and Gentiles, and*

* I have been informed that each member of this sect teaches his child some handicraft, in order that he may be ready, when the time comes, to take his part in the erection of the building.

the peculiarity of the Divine love in the times of the Gentiles," as taught both in the Old and New Testament.*

Again, the new "Syrian and Palestine Colonisation Society" propose to promote their object by sending out "persons of good character, whether Jews or Christians;" though how these are to live and work well and peaceably together, combining for mutual protection, and the formation of common laws essential to a colony, save by the Jews and Christians merging their religious principles, thoughtful people who understand the situation are at a loss to know.

Moreover, the existence of the immensely wealthy religious corporations of the Latin, and Greek, and other nominally Christian communities, with their convents, churches, schools, and other institutions, crowded together at Jerusalem, and scattered over so many parts of the land, representing at least some 300,000,000 of nominal Christians abroad,

* When Mr. Wilson's first work on our Israelitish origin appeared, Mr. Bickersteth noticed it as follows: "His system is, in my view, unsupported in its proofs, and contrary to the plain testimony of Scripture. Instead of blindness in part happening to Israel, and the fulness of the elect among the Gentiles now coming in, this view would make in the whole of the Gentile dispensation Israel the seeking people, and the Gentiles the blinded people, and destroy the contrast of the Apostle between Jews and Gentiles. The sovereignty of God, on this hypothesis, would be resolved into almost a carnal and mechanical selection of one family, instead of that largeness and fulness of love which the Holy Scriptures reveal, which has no respect of persons, but deals both righteously and graciously with the whole human race." (Bickersteth's "Restoration of the Jews," p. lxi.)

suggests plainly that if Israel are now to return to their own land it must be by some new agreement with these old hereditary enemies.* While Turkey's power was sufficient to hold together her vast and heterogeneous dominion, the Ottoman soldiers with fixed bayonets settled the differences that arose between Jews and Christians, or more frequently amongst the Christians themselves. But now that the Porte has become decrepit, and the time has arrived when Palestine at least must soon pass virtually out of its hands, what but a union amongst the various faiths now so powerfully represented throughout the country can, humanly speaking, solve the difficulties that are sure to arise? The Papacy and the Greek Church have of late years been raising magnificent structures both within and without the walls of Jerusalem, and show no intention of abandoning the city. Nay, more, in the case of Rome, for some time past, there has been every reason to suspect an intention of removing the Pope from what his adherents are now pleased to call his "prison" in the Vatican to

* While as Protestants we have succeeded to some extent in educating and civilising the people, the members of our various Churches throughout Palestine proper are, alas! too few in number, and feeble in spiritual life, to be expected to weigh for much in the coming struggle. Still we may cling to the hope, and should make it our earnest prayer, that God will more abundantly bless them in the testing times that are at hand. Amid purifying trials it may in mercy be granted to them to evince a greater spirit of love, self-sacrifice, and missionary zeal than it can be said, by those who know them, they have done of late in a time of comparative ease and prosperity.

the Holy City. All semblance of temporal power is departing, and the Jesuits have judged that a removal of the seat of the apostasy to Jerusalem is the only step to revive its waning prestige, and kindle afresh the expiring fanaticism of its devotees. In further confirmation of this we have only to consider the attitude of Rome at the present crisis, and the more than rumours abroad of her having succeeded in arranging a concordat with Turkey at a moment when all the European kingdoms have failed her. In a work entitled "*La Papauté à Jérusalem*," by the Abbé Michon, the removal of the Pope to that city as a "neutral place, free from all the political complications of the West," is advocated as the means of the Papacy commencing "a new era of fruitful apostleship after its long sorrows!" He goes on to tell us that "during the year 1855, while the war in the East was raging, and there were fears of a complication of affairs in Europe, this proposal was made to the Papal Government. Entire liberty of action was guaranteed to the Sovereign Pontiff at Jerusalem, and the means of sustaining his high dignity in an honourable manner were promised him. *A railroad from Jerusalem to Jaffa* would have rendered the communication of the Papacy with Europe as rapid as from Rome itself." To this he adds: "It is easy to see what facilities the presence of the Sovereign Pontiff in the East would afford to *the grand scheme for the union of the Churches.*" Since much of the above was written,

the author's attention has been called to the fact that the railway, to the recent survey for which he has already alluded, was a work commenced avowedly for the aggrandisement of Rome, in which only Roman Catholic promoters are to take part, and which has on these conditions received the sanction and blessing of the Pope !* It is true the ostensible object is to earn money, to be devoted to the purpose of increasing Latin establishments throughout Palestine, but, to those who know the country, the present prospect of such a railway proving a lucrative speculation is altogether too vague to account for the scheme. We are forced to conclude that the Roman curia have decided to carry out Abbé Michon's proposal. It is the shadow of the coming time which commentators on prophecy have so long foreseen, when "the Pope's loss of temporal dominion will prove the commencement of his greatest power, and the Church's worst conflict."

Even men of the world are at this moment penetrated by a painful conviction that some momentous and disastrous events, involving startling changes, are about to happen. They may well be thus alarmed. The development of Antichrist now at hand is that last and terrible form of evil, foretold by our Saviour, during which, "*if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.*"†

A great mistake, into which some are falling, is that the Ottoman dominions are about at once to be entirely

* See Appendix G.

† Matt. xxiv. 24.

confiscated, and that Russia will immediately take their place ; forgetting that the great apostasy of the Gentiles, including the death of the witnesses and consequent persecution of the Church, is to happen before the "second (or Othman) woe " passes away.* These apprehend immediate war; but if the above conclusions are right it is not war we have at present to fear (that will indeed come terribly in its time), but peace—a delusive, disastrous, destructive peace. War, dreadful as we deem it to be, is not the worst calamity. A union, offensive and defensive, with persecuting and anti-Christian powers in those things where they have betrayed God's truth, although promising a prospect of more than millennial security and progress, is as much worse than war as sin is worse than suffering. In the present easy, careless age we are too apt to lose sight of this. Outward and present success is made the test of every scheme. The world's plan of self-seeking drives out God's plan of self-negation. We hear very much about self-improvement, but very little about the more excellent and Gospel way of self-sacrifice. Let us lay these things to heart, and fix our eyes on a suffering Saviour, "Jesus Christ, and Him crucified," determined to lose our life for His sake that we may find it. Gazing on this precious sight we shall be proof against the meretricious, and to the thoughtless, the overwhelming attraction of the "image " of worldly wisdom, power,

* Rev. xi. 3—13, xiii.

and unity that men everywhere are already preparing to worship.

Many, on the other hand—and these are the vast majority—will not hear of any danger, at least for the Church, but see only an era of peace and prosperity. They point to the material improvements, the spread of education, the church-building, the increased activity of ministers and members of Churches as compared with the state of things at the commencement of this century, and declare the contrast to be every way favourable to the present age. It is often asked by such, Why take such a despondent view of things? Why, with so bright a prospect before us as believers possess, forecast the future so darkly? I answer, I do not fear for the truth, nor for the final triumph of that living Church against which the gates of hell shall not prevail. But for Churches in particular there are no such promises; and whether we look at what is declared in Scripture of the last days of this dispensation, or at what is actually taking place around us, we shall see cause for great alarm. “The end of the world,” or rather the age or dispensation in which we live, is everywhere in the Bible depicted darkly. Leaven is in each instance a figure of wickedness, and the Jews could only have understood our Lord in one way when, speaking amongst other aspects of “the kingdom of heaven,” *i.e.* the kingdom of privilege, or outward Church, He solemnly declared it was “like leaven which a woman took and hid in

three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.”* Certainly there is strong reason to believe, that the seven letters to the Churches in the second and third chapters of Revelation are a connected series, representing in order the several progressive stages of the professing Church at large. Here the last, or Laodicean state, when Christ, speaking of a premonitory knock, represents Himself as at the door, is one of universal self-righteousness and lukewarmness—a condition connected with unqualified disapproval and utter rejection: “I will spue thee out of My mouth.”† Speaking of these times our Lord said, “Because iniquity shall abound the love of many shall wax cold.”‡ The Saviour’s intimation under the sixth vial, “Behold, I come as a thief,” strongly intimates the general disregard and unbelief of men at that day with respect to His second advent; and the same with

* Matthew xiii. 33. May not the three measures of meal be Rome, Greece and the Eastern Churches, and the Protestant Churches, the three great natural divisions of Christendom? The seven parables in this chapter, like the seven epistles to the Churches in the Revelation, have been supposed prophetically to indicate seven different stages of the Church.

† Revelation iii. 14—20. Here the Lord’s people are represented, even amidst almost universal depravity, as still to be found, and as needing especially at this time to be prepared and purified by suffering (ver. 19), while Christ’s near approach is plainly declared (ver. 20). In the previous stage of the Church—the Philadelphian (ver. 7—12)—we have, I believe, a picture of the period of the Reformation, when the Church is said to be kept from a very terrible and trying time, which is spoken of “as about to come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth” (ver. 10), and is that upon which we have now entered.

‡ Matthew xxiv. 12.

relation to His own people seems implied in the question, "When the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?"* Peter tells us plainly that "there shall come in the last days scoffers walking after their own lusts and saying, Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation;"† and in this same second chapter of his Second Epistle draws a fearful picture of the state of things evidently within the professing Church. In the fourth chapter of the First Epistle to Timothy we have seen in "*the latter times*" that the Romish apostasy would arise. But in the third chapter of the Second Epistle we read of a condition of the Church subsequent to the power of the Papacy, for it is especially said to be "*in the last days.*"‡ The scene of violence, lawlessness, and horrible wickedness depicted in this passage is distinctly said to be, not an atheistical state of society, but a condition of the Church, for the appalling list of crime ends with, "having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof."§ Truly "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse."||

And if we look at what is actually taking place we find a sad confirmation of all this. Thoughtful men have good cause to deplore the present decline of Evan-

* Revelation xvi. 15; Luke xviii. 8.

† 2 Peter iii. 3, 4.

‡ 1 Timothy iv. 1—3; 2 Timothy iii. 1—5.

§ 2 Timothy iii. 5.

|| 2 Timothy iii. 13.

gelical Protestantism, while Romish error is forcing its lawless way into the Church of England, and widespread Latitudinarianism is sapping its foundations. Even many of those who hold the truth, infected by the evil spirit of the age—so-called liberal—out of fear of being thought narrow-minded, are beginning to cease their solemn protest, and to conform to practices which their godly forefathers unceasingly condemned. Worldliness is rife, and amid its din the voice to contend for God is drowned. It speaks little for our spiritual enlightenment that this age should be chosen by the Jesuits as a fitting season for the promulgation of the doctrine of Papal infallibility; or for its morality, that leading men in this country should unite to raise a memorial to the poet Byron, whom the public press of his own day denounced for the gross sensuality and impiety of his works. The frivolity that marks every class of society; the reckless race to be rich, with all of selfishness and dishonesty which it brings in its train; the disrespect to age and rank; the impure and sceptical tone of popular literature; the open practice of sorcery and necromancy under the name of spiritualism; the awful heathenism of our overgrown cities, baffling every attempt to deal with it; and the decline of religious education in the public schools, owing to the unhappy differences of Christian men; these and such like signs of demoralisation indicate the state of things in 2 Tim. iii. 1—4 arising within

the Church even of this favoured land. Communistic and Socialist tendencies, too, and the great increase of secret societies, recently referred to so gravely by Lord Beaconsfield, may well cause alarm. The advance of science, even where it is not directed against religion, is chiefly to be seen in perfecting deadly instruments for the destruction of human life. Never before were such preparations made, or the wealth and ingenuity of man employed as now, for the purposes of war. All Europe rings with the sound of armaments, and, careless enough in most respects, is in dreadful earnest about this.* Wars and rumours of wars are not in themselves signs of the end ; indeed our Lord specially warns us against such a mistake ;† but that professing Christian nations should thus employ their chief strength proves how little vital religion is influencing the councils of the world. It is strange, indeed, amid so sad a state of things, to see many leaders in Church and State pointing with pride and self-complacency to the church-building, church restoration, and increase in the number of church services, &c., which certainly mark the age, as signs of the healthy condition of our Nation and Establishment. All this outward religious activity, apart from soundness in the faith and deep spiritual life, will do no more good than it did long ago, when, as ancient ecclesiastical monuments indicate, it was a prominent feature of the darkest period of the dark ages !

* See Appendix H.

† Matthew xxiv. 6 ; Luke xxi. 8, 9.

That a great, though irregular, revival of true religion is taking place, however, cannot be denied. In His own way, ever calculated "to stain the pride of all glory," by very humble instruments, often apart altogether from ordinary Church organisations, and sometimes in spite of their unfaithfulness, God is now gathering a great draught into the Gospel net. But there is nothing inconsistent in this with the coming of a world-wide and unexampled state of apostasy, ending in fearful judgments. It has been well remarked: "It was recorded not many years before the destruction of Jerusalem, 'a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith' (Acts vi. 7), and but ten years before it is said, 'Thou seest, brother, how many thousands (*μυριάδες*, tens of thousands) of Jews there are which believe,' (Acts xxi. 20)."* Let us be

* Mr. Bickersteth "On the Prophecies," p. 238. The same writer well said in 1836: "It seems at first sight very improbable that at the time when there is an extended revival of religion and a vast increase of faithful ministers, and growth of all kinds of exertion to spread the Gospel and to do good, such things should be the prelude and preparation for judgments and wrath upon the nations. But the growth of wickedness with this growth of good, and the plain predictions of God's Word (Revelation xiv. 6, 7; Isaiah xi. 4, 9), and the past history of Noah's preaching before the Deluge, and the prophets raised up before the first destruction of Jerusalem, and the apostles going forth from Jerusalem before its second destruction, may lead us to see that this is the thing which God has foretold, and the past history of the Church has illustrated. . . . It is a dangerous delusion for the Church to be anticipating peaceful triumphs, prosperous days of enlarging dominion and uninterrupted successes, when we may be on the verge of trial and conflict, sorrow and suffering. It is much more safe to be counting the cost and preparing for the cross, and looking to the crown, in the way of patient faithfulness unto death, rather than

thoroughly on our guard against the views of those who are crying "Peace, peace," lest they lull us into a false security. Three great and contradictory tendencies, represented by the messages of three symbolic angels, are abroad in our day. The first is the blessed preaching of the everlasting Gospel, now so fully and faithfully proclaimed by men of every class and calling. The second is the great tendency of the age to declare that "Babylon (*i.e.* Rome) has fallen," and that all fear of persecution and danger is over. But there is another tendency along with these, and one most needful to warn men of the falsehood of this last foolish and groundless exultation, and to prepare them for a much worse evil at hand. This is a faithful declaration of the real danger of our day. "And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured without mixture into the cup of His indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:

in the way of an unmingled glow of success. It is true that it is our richest privilege to fulfil the work which God now assigns to His Church (Revelation xiv. 6—13), and that any spiritual success is a gracious reward for our efforts; but there is considerable danger (and the author speaks experimentally, having himself often fallen into this snare) of looking only at the bright result, and disregarding the intervening great tribulation (Daniel xii. 1) and the hour of judgment (Revelation xiv. 7)."

and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever : and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.”* Thus will the people of God be known by a purely Protestant sign at the last. They will not be specially the members of this or that Church, but simply *those who faithfully protest against “the beast and his image,” and refuse to receive his mark.* The 1260 years are certainly either already closed, or shortly about to terminate. Let it clearly be understood that this is the time when the “beast shall make war against” the witnesses. To resist error at such a season will be the chief sign of one who loves the truth. Let none be affected by the taunt of those who style the true Reformed faith, with reference to its earnest protest against error, “a religion of negations.” In the figurative description given of “the first resurrection” in the twentieth chapter of Revelation, Christ’s faithful witnesses, the martyrs, with especial reference to those who shall suffer in the latest persecution, are again described as His by a negative sign: “I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and *which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark*

* Revelation xiv. 6—13. If Mr. Garratt’s view of the “seven signs,” as given in his invaluable “Commentary on the Revelation of St. John,” be correct, the three tendencies above are the “fifth sign,” and in the order of the Book occur at this very point of time, our own age.

*upon their foreheads or in their hands ; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.**

Alike for the warning of Jew and Gentile, I have felt bound to call attention at length to these things. The restoration of Israel is intimately connected with the great apostasy of the Gentiles. If "through their fall" salvation is come unto the Gentiles, so, when "the fulness of the Gentiles be come in"—i.e. as Simeon explains, "the people," or election God is going "to take out of them for His name"—their rejection, in turn, for high-mindedness and unbelief will prepare the way for the receiving back of the Jews to all their ancient covenant privileges.†

I must now pass on to consider what will happen at the close of the great Œcumenical Council of Jerusalem. A widespread and fearful persecution will, as we have seen, be set on foot. It is the last persecution of Christ's people, and it will be the most systematic, terrible, and intense to which they have been exposed. There is every reason to believe that many who have been deluded during the sitting of the Council will, at the close of the three and a half years, repent of their error. The witnesses are to revive. Amongst the numerous errors abroad in our day is one chiefly traceable to that body known as the Brethren, that the rapture of Christ's people, or at

* Revelation xx. 4.

† Romans xi.

least a very large part of them, at His coming, will take place before persecution arises, and that they will be entirely removed from trial; whereas, on the contrary, the teaching of Scripture is that believers will be exposed to those last snares that should deceive, if it were possible, "the very elect," and will glorify God by sealing their testimony to the truth with their blood. Much is made of the text, "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."* But in this very chapter affliction and persecution for Christ's sake are specially set forth as the lot of the faithful Christian, and "the things that shall come to pass" are evidently the fearful judgments and vengeance of God which are to fall upon the wicked. Before these judgments, indeed, believers will be taken away by being "caught up to meet the Lord in the air" at the close of the persecution, when He comes in "flaming fire to take vengeance" on the persecutors. Can it really be supposed gain "to escape" a martyr's crown? Is it really loss to suffer for Christ? Away with such nineteenth-century ideas, and let us cultivate the spirit of the first believers, and learn what

* Luke xxi. 36. Compare 1 Corinthians x. 13: "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation also make a way of escape, that ye may be able to bear it." Here the escape is represented as consistent with 'passing through the trial. The trial, in fact, qualifies for standing before the Son of Man.

that means, "Amen, amen, I say unto you . . . he that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal." *

It is at this time of widespread persecution, probably towards its close, that we must place the destruction of the Papacy, and the rejection of Antichrist by Israel in the midst of the last week of Daniel, or the close of the Council. It would appear, from the order of the Book of Revelation, that the seven "vials of the wrath of God" will be now rapidly, indeed almost simultaneously, poured out. Under the sixth, "three unclean spirits, like frogs," which "are the spirits of devils, working miracles," "go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." † We have seen that on the fall of Rome the beast still survives in its final stage, led by the false prophet, whom we have every reason to believe is the Greek Church, and supported by the Emperor of Russia.‡ Whether Israel

* John xii. 24, 25.

† Revelation xvi. 12—14.

‡ It should be carefully noticed that "the little horn" in Daniel vii., the Papacy, comes to its end at a different time, and in a different way, from the little horn of Daniel viii., the Greek Apostasy. The former has its power finally destroyed by the hand of man: "The judgment shall sit, and *they* shall take away his dominion." With this agrees Rev. xvii. 16: "The ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore (Babylon), and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh and burn her with fire." What was so awfully begun at the French Revolution, which was a shadow thrown forward of the coming end, will be accomplished under the seventh trumpet, about the time of the Church's rapture, probably in some world-wide communistic and socialist movement. Although this

are at this time converted through the mission of Elijah, who is to come in person, before the "great and dreadful day of the Lord" (as he came in spirit during the days of John the Baptist), or whether their conversion as a nation comes somewhat later, does not so certainly appear.* However this may be, it is clear that by obtaining possession of their own city and awakening the wrath of Russia, they will bring down upon themselves their last punishment. To me it seems that this fearful judgment, everywhere represented as sent in anger, implies that as in the days of John's ministry, so in that of Elijah's, the bulk of the people remain unbelieving, though a large remnant, described as a "third part" of those at least in Jeru-

will be one of the latest chapters of earth's history during the present dispensation, the time is before that of Christ's coming with His saints in judgment. This is implied in Daniel vii. 26, "And they shall take away his dominion, *to consume and to destroy it unto the end,*" and also in the fact that the judgment on Babylon, or Papal Rome, will be executed by men. But in both these respects the Greek "little horn" differs from the Latin. The time of its power is said to be "when transgressors are come to the full," and it is especially said to be broken by standing up against "the Prince of princes," that is, opposing Christ at the very time of His Advent, by the brightness of whose coming, and not by human instrumentality, he is to be destroyed, for "he shall be broken without hand" (Daniel viii. 23, 25). The Latin "little horn" will be the leader in the persecution of Christians, and will immediately afterwards miserably perish. When seen as the "scarlet woman" in its last form, just before its destruction, it is described as "drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus" (Rev. xvii. 4—6). The Greek "little horn," which is to come into its greatest power on surviving the Latin, will be the chief persecutor of Israel. See also Appendix F.

* Malachi iv. 5, 6.

salem, are prepared for the Lord's coming.* Not only does it appear, as we have seen from Daniel viii., that the Greek Church, supported by Russia, as the director of the last form of Antichrist, will persecute Israel, but we learn this from another clear and important prophecy, contained in Ezekiel xxxviii. and xxxix.

Russia is the third and last "woe," each, as we might conclude, increasing in intensity.† The first four trumpets—the four successive Gothic and Vandal invasions of the Roman Empire, by which it was overthrown—issuing in the commonwealths of Europe, were on the whole a benefit to mankind, and as such are distinguished from the last three.‡ Before these sounded, John "heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth, by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels which are yet to sound." The Saracen "woe," under Mohammed, was the first of these, and it spread desolation over some of the fairest provinces of earth. But withal, the Arab race is a noble one, and many monuments attest the energy, liberality, and magnificence of the Caliphs. Then came the Turkish or Ottoman "woe," increasing in bitterness, for this

* Zechariah xiii. 8, 9. Israel's conversion must take place after the rapture of the Church, or otherwise they would have been changed at the Lord's coming, and caught up to meet Him "in the air," and would not be left to battle with Antichrist. † Rev. viii. 13.

‡ Bishop Newton, Elliott, and many others, give plain and satisfactory interpretations of these first four trumpets.

race has left its mark in ruins upon every land under its sway. Cruel, idle, ignorant, and sensual, the Turk proved far worse than the Arab. We are still living under this "woe," but it is soon to pass away, and there is one more yet to come. This is unmistakeably Russia. It comes like the pitiless "hail" from the north,* and it will, during its brief moment of power, be the instrument of the worst miseries that man's lust of dominion has ever brought upon mankind. The Empire of the Czars is actually named as the last power which will assail restored Israel, "Gog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal;" i.e. the Prince of Russia, Muscovy, and Tobolsk, a country thus named before it was formed.† The very name "Rosh" means in Hebrew 'chief or head,' and nothing less than this does Russia aim to be—the head, and chief,

* Isaiah xxviii. 2, 17; Revelation xi. 19, xvi. 21.

† Ezekiel xxxviii. 2, 3, xxxix. 1. This is the literal and grammatical rendering of רוֹשׁ רִשִּׁי (rosh rosh). The Hebrew word רוֹשׁ (rosh) has been translated as a proper name in the Septuagint, "ἄρχοντα 'Pōc." In Symmachus and Theodotion it is "Principem Rosh." "Rosh," Lowth tells us, "taken as a proper name, signifies those inhabitants of Scythia from whence the Russians derive their name and original." Magog by Pliny and Josephus is placed on "the east and north of the Black Sea, now forming part of the Russian Empire, viz. the provinces of the Don and Dnieper." "Rosh" survives in the name of the country, Russia, and of the language, Russ. The common appellation for Russian throughout the East, "Muscove," like the city Moscow, preserves the form Meshech, while Tubal is to be traced in Tobolsk. The very mention of bows and arrows (Ezekiel xxxix. 9) seems to identify this power, which is perhaps the only civilised state in the world that still employs corps of archers.

and prince of the world. The lust of conquest and dominion is the distinguishing characteristic of this hardy and half-civilised people. The historian Alison tells us rightly : "*The prevailing passion of the Russian nation is the love of conquest. Every Russian is inspired with the conviction that his country is to conquer the world.*" Indeed, the present energetic Pan-Slavonic movement, welding into one all the kindred nationalities that hold the Greek faith, is an evident preparation for what must come in the end.

In seeking to possess Jerusalem, religious fanaticism will feed the flame of ambition and covetousness. There will be much to tempt this power, and the huge confederacy of nations which it leads to battle,—“Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya ; Gomer and all his bands ; the house of Togarmah of the North Quarters and all his bands.” The Jews will have naturally brought back much wealth with them, and Russia, in pursuing her nefarious schemes of self-aggrandisement, will greatly need money for that purpose, even as she needs it now. “Thus saith the Lord God, It shall come to pass, that at the same time shall things come into thy mind, and thou shalt think an evil thought : and thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwallled villages : I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates, to take a spoil, and to take a prey ; to turn thine hand upon . . . the people that are gathered out of the

nations, which have gotten cattle and goods. . . . Art thou come up to take a spoil? hast thou gathered thy company to take a prey? to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take a great spoil?"*

But doubtless religious fanaticism also will lend a fell purpose to Israel's last foe. Few sights can be more sad than to watch the Russian pilgrim at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. No Brahmin could present a more abject appearance than such a devotee, as he crawls from one site of superstition to another, worshipping spots of apocryphal sanctity, and relics that have evidently been forged. No fakirs or dancing dervishes yield themselves up to more violent and unreasoning fanaticism, than the wild crowd of such men who at Easter time throng the same church. These divide their time between cursing the Jews, and quarrelling and fighting amongst themselves, until, on some occasions, many have been trodden to death in endeavouring to light their torches first at the miraculous fire, which they believe bursts forth on that morning from the tomb of the Lord on the entrance of the "fire bishop."

The Czars have taken pains to promote this lying wonder and its attendant scandalous superstition. Near Moscow there exists a place called "Voskresenskoë, or New Jerusalem." "It is a complete counterfeit of the Holy City, one of its chief attractions being a mock tomb of the Saviour, to which

* Ezekiel xxxviii. 5, 6, 10—13.

crowds of pious Russian devotees continually resort for the purpose of praying for the deliverance of the supposed real tomb, and are there taught to supplicate also for the extermination of those who hold the holy places, and to invoke a curse upon such as have betrayed the Christian cause by becoming their allies." Doubtless, therefore, the descent of the Russian hordes upon restored Israel will partake in part of the nature of a last crusade, or holy war, as well as a war of aggrandisement. Religious fanaticism, to which the Greek Church is degradingly addicted, will lend its horrors to the scene.

Terrible will be Israel's distress! It has been supposed by many that England at that time will stand by the Jews. "Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof," appear to be represented as opposing "the Prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal" at the time of his descent on Palestine, and saying, "Art thou come to take a spoil? hast thou gathered thy company to take a prey, to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take a great spoil?" They think those words imply defiance, "Art thou come up to do this? *thou shalt not do it!*"* England, the modern Tarshish, and the possessor of Dedan (Aden), and bearer of the lion-emblazoned shield, will, we have seen, by this time have repented after her fall, and would under such circumstances naturally defend

* Ezekiel xxxviii, 13.

penitent and defenceless Israel, though she be called upon to do it single-handed.* But, nevertheless, success will attend the arms of Russia.

This power, Israel's last foe during this dispensation, is frequently alluded to in Scripture as "the Assyrian."† I am not aware that attention has yet been called to the fact that in almost all of these passages allusion is made to the distinguishing mark of this State, its terrible use of the rod and the scourge. In the tenth chapter of Isaiah, where we read of the descent of this assailant on restored Israel, the remnant amongst them who are penitent are exhorted "not to be afraid of the Assyrian, who shall *"smite" with a rod, and shall lift up his staff after the manner of Egypt.*"‡ The significant threatening, too, in this passage against the proud oppressor, is, "The Lord of Hosts shall stir up a *scourge* for him according to the slaughter of Midian at the rock of Oreb, and as *His rod* was upon

* Professor T. R. Birks understands the "king of the south," in Daniel xi., as applying to England, who, by taking upon herself the protection of Egypt, will specially merit the name. The last title added to the English crown, which declares Her gracious Majesty the Queen "Empress of India," is very significant in this direction.

† This term implies that Russia at the last will occupy the territory formerly held by that power. This, by her great and stealthy conquests in Central Asia, she is now actually acquiring. Besides, amongst the Russian allies or dependencies at this time, mentioned by name, is Persia (𐤀𐤓𐤐𐤓 Ezekiel xxxviii. 5), the chief seat of the Assyrian monarchy. The term also may imply an Assyrian origin, or, still more likely, the possession of the Assyrian characteristics of pride, idolatry, and warlike prowess.

‡ Scourging was (Exodus v. 14), and still is, a favourite mode of punishment in Egypt.

the sea, so shall He lift it up after the manner of Egypt." * We have already glanced at the description in Isaiah xxviii. 17—19 of Israel's false security when first returning to Palestine in unbelief, and the manner in which it will be swept away "when the *overflowing scourge*" shall pass through, and they "shall be trodden down by it." Very fitly, it would seem, is Russia thus figuratively described, as spreading her enormous armies like a mighty flood of waters over the land. The knout—the whip, or scourge—is the great feature of Russian rule. By the lash of its heavy thongs, administered often by soldiers, the Prince of Rosh enforces his imperial authority. Sometimes the corporal punishment so peculiar to this country is given by means of the rod. Those who are in any danger just now of being misled by the pretence of Russian mildness, and sympathy with suffering in Turkish provinces, would do well to bear in mind what Muscovite governors have done in this way to those who have resented their tyranny. Well may Russia be branded as "the Assyrian which smote with a rod."† No records of barbarous and cold-blooded cruelty can surpass the terrors of the Russian "scourge" when the Czars have been dealing

* Isaiah x. 26.

† Isaiah x. 24, xxx. 31; see also Isaiah ix. 4, where events connected with Christ's second advent are brought into view at a time when His first coming is foretold. The "battle" to be with "burning and fuel of fire" (verse 5), in every instance where it occurs, marks the Saviour's second coming in judgment on the ungodly.

with their own political offenders.* Israel may learn from a consideration of this subject something of the horrors they will yet experience from Muscovite brutality, when this overflowing *scourge* passes through "morning by morning, and day by day, and it shall be a vexation only to understand the report." Yea, "there shall be a *time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time.*"† But terrible as it will be in its intensity, it will not last long, for then God's ancient "people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." Though the Assyrian Antichrist "shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many: and he shall plant the tabernacles of his palaces between the seas in the glorious holy mountain, *yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.*"‡ When God's purpose in Israel's suffering shall be accomplished, that moment it shall cease. This people assuredly shall not utterly perish, for the Lord has said, "Though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee." The *rebellious Jews*, by far the greater part, are by these judgments to be finally consumed, for God has declared of that time, "I will cause you to pass under the rod, . . . and I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against Me."§ The *remnant* is to be saved, as Isaiah

* See Appendix I.

† Daniel xi. 44, 45.

‡ Daniel xii. 1.

§ Ezekiel xx. 37, 38.

foretells: "The remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty God." * Jehovah has declared, "I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried; they shall call on My name, and I will hear them; I will say, It is My people, and they shall say, The Lord is my God." † And here we are brought to contemplate God's second purpose in Israel's gathering, viz.—

II. Their conversion as a nation, and their complete and glorious restoration to the Land of Promise.

Man's extremity is God's opportunity. When the case of Israel seems hopeless, when all creature-trust has been broken, and the awakened part of the nation have learnt to look to Jesus of Nazareth as their Saviour; and cry to Him alone for help, "He will appear to their joy." Of this time it is declared: "Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence; He will come and save you." † This is "the day of the Lord," which shall come on the careless world "as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, when the earth also, and the works that are therein

* Isaiah x. 21.

† Zechariah xiii. 9.

‡ Isaiah xxxv. 4. The immediate context shows the inauguration of the Millennium.

shall be burned up.”* The day for whose coming the afflicted saints of God in every age have been taught to look, since “Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.”† The day of which Paul wrote to comfort the troubled Thessalonians, as that “when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.”‡ A day which for its suddenness shall come “as a snare upon all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth;”§ and in its general features will resemble “the day that Lot went out of Sodom,” and it “rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all,” for “even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed.”||

Nothing is more certain than the fact of Christ's second personal coming to this earth before its regeneration. Nor are we left in doubt as to what spot of earth it is to which the Saviour will descend. The angels on Olivet at His ascension said to the Apostles, “Ye men

* 2 Peter iii. 10—12.

† Jude 14, 15.

‡ 2 Thessalonians i. 7 8

§ Luke xxi. 35.

|| Luke xvii. 29, 30.

of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven ? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." * In the account of Israel's final deliverance in Zechariah, it is declared, "Jehovah shall go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fought in the day of battle. And His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east." † This is no figure of speech, no anthropomorphic expression ; those very feet of Jehovah Jesus, "which eighteen hundred years ago were nailed for our redemption to the bitter cross," will tread once more the mountain hallowed by His tears and blood in the days of His humiliation. This mighty deliverance, with its attendant circumstances, is graphically sketched in Zechariah xii.—xiv. The terrible strait of Jerusalem when the people and nations are round about in the siege ; the taking and sacking of the city, with the atrocities that the Russians will commit ; the godly sorrow of the saved remnant ; the coming of the Redeemer to Zion ; the mighty earthquake that will rend Olivet in twain, and the sudden, fiery, overwhelming destruction of the foe, all are plainly set forth. While this account of the Second Advent is confirmed by Ezekiel, we learn from that prophet further particulars. Here the nations

* Acts i. 11.

† Zechariah xiv. 3, 4. The Lord will probably come from the East : Matthew xxiv. 27 ; compare Ezekiel xi. 23 with xliii. 2.

which Zechariah speaks of as "in the siege against Jerusalem," are, as we have seen, mentioned by name. Concerning these confederate hosts led on by Russia—"Gog, the Prince of Rosh"—we read it shall come to pass at the same time "when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord God, that My fury shall come up in My face. . . . And I will call for a sword against him throughout all My mountains, saith the Lord God: every man's sword shall be against his brother. And I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood; and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone." * And again, further: "Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal: and I will turn thee back, and leave but the sixth part of thee, . . . and I will smite thy bow out of thy left hand. Thou shalt fall upon the mountains of Israel, thou, and all thy bands, and the people that is with thee: I will give thee unto the ravenous birds of every sort, and to the beasts of the field to be devoured." † The greatness of this judgment on the nations is further shown by the fact that Israel will be seven years burning the weapons of the host with fire, and seven months burying the slain. ‡

* Ezekiel xxxviii. 18, 21, 22.

† Ezekiel xxxix. 1—4.

‡ Ezekiel xxxix. 9—15.

Isaiah, too, tells of this time. Christ is represented as coming with dyed or blood-stained garments from Bozrah and the Land of Edom. To the question "Wherefore art Thou red in Thine apparel?" the Lord replies, "I have trodden the winepress alone ; and of the people there was none with Me : for I will tread them in Mine anger, and trample them in My fury ; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon My garments, and I will stain all My raiment. For the day of vengeance is in Mine heart, and the year of My redeemed is come." * The locality of Edom is also mentioned in the description of the same event in another passage : "Come near, ye nations, to hear ; . . . for the indignation of the Lord is upon all nations, and His fury upon all their armies ; He hath utterly destroyed them. . . . For my sword shall be bathed in heaven : behold, it shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of My curse, to judgment ; . . . for the Lord hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea. . . . For it is the day of the Lord's vengeance, and the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion." † It does not seem to me quite certain that we are to look for a judgment literally upon the land of Edom, though it may be so. The descendants of Esau are in other passages a figure of the enemies of God's people generally, and may here represent the apostate Gentile world. The awful deluge of fire which is always

* Isaiah lxiii. 1—6.

† Isaiah xxxiv. 1—8.

spoken of as an accompaniment of Christ's coming to judgment is specially said to be universal. In Isaiah we read: "By fire and by His sword will the Lord plead with *all flesh*;" and in Ezekiel: "I will send a fire on Magog, and among them that dwell carelessly in the isles." The judgment by fire that will begin at Jerusalem will visit many other parts of the world.* All that mercy can do, we know, will have been exhausted ere these "days of vengeance." The long-suffering of God is waiting now as in the days of Noah, but as in that age, so in this, there is a limit; "a line unseen, and mercy turns to judgment there,"—judgment just, overwhelming, and final. To "all the kingdoms of the world, which are upon the face of the earth," Jehovah of Hosts declares, "Lo, I begin to bring evil on the city which is called by My name (Jerusalem), and should ye be utterly unpunished? Ye shall not be unpunished: for I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth. . . . For the Lord hath a controversy with the nations, He will plead with all flesh. . . . Behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth. And the slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of

* Isaiah lvi. 16; Ezekiel xxxix. 6. It has been well observed: "That this judgment will not extend over the whole earth, is clear from what follows: 'I will send those that escape of them unto the nations.' The Lord will 'plead with all flesh' by fire, and yet neither the whole globe nor the whole human family will be destroyed."

the earth even unto the other end of the earth : they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried ; they shall be dung upon the ground." *

We have seen in the nineteenth chapter of Revelation an account of the destruction of "the wild beast" in its last form, viz. under the ascendancy of the Greek Church, supported by the arms of Russia and her allies. The connexion of Israel with this event, and their conversion by means of it, is implied in the Hebrew "Alleluias," four times repeated in the commemorative song of triumph, now for the first time introduced into the Book.† When the Lord comes to stand again on the Mount of Olives, He will be attended by all His members, the whole Church of the first-born, as we learn in Zechariah : "The Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee." ‡ This too is set before us in the chapter in question. First we have the bridal of the Lamb.§ This will take place, as we have seen, previous to Israel's tribulation, at the close of the last persecution of the Church. When the trumpet shall sound, the dead shall be raised, and the living amongst the elect shall be gathered to meet the Lord in the air, that part of the universe where Jesus will receive, welcome, and publicly espouse His risen and completed Church, at "the

* Jeremiah xxv. 29—33.

† Revelation xix. 1—6.

‡ Zechariah xiv. 5 ; see also Jude 14, 15. It seems plainly implied in Matthew xix. 28, and 1 Corinthians vi. 2.

§ Revelation xix. 7—9.

marriage supper of the Lamb." Then they will attend Him on His "strange work" of Judgment.*

We must carefully distinguish between Israel's tribulation during the latter half of Daniel's last week of seven years, and "the days of vengeance," or great tribulation of the world, when Christ comes in judgment at or after the end of the week. The latter is the fearful scene referred to in so many passages of Scripture as happening at the close of the former, and described so vividly by the prophets as "the day of the Lord's vengeance," "Armageddon," "the battle of the great day of God Almighty." Neither the rage of the Greek little horn, nor the evil it will inflict, are dwelt upon here. These are, as it were, lost sight of in the far more tremendous events of its miraculous and overwhelming destruction, when at the Lord's coming He pleads "with all flesh by fire," rendering "His anger with fury, and His rebukes with flames of fire," "and the slain of the Lord shall be many."† Then, we read, at that awful field of carnage, "the supper of the great God," to which the hosts of vultures, eagles, and other birds of prey constantly hovering over Palestine are called to consume the slain:‡ "The beast was taken, and with him the false

* Revelation xix. 11—15; Isaiah xxviii. 21, 22.

† Isaiah lxvi. 15, 16; Daniel viii. 25.

‡ There is striking connection between the various figures employed in Scripture. A precisely similar passage to Revelation xix. 17, 18, occurs in connection with the same event, the destruction at the Saviour's coming of the hordes led by Russia, in Ezekiel xxxix.

prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone." *

Deep as will be Israel's affliction under the terrors of Antichrist, deeper still will now be their godly sorrow for sin, when they see to Whom it is they owe their salvation. Christ tells us: "They shall look on Me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for Him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born. In that day there shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadad-rimmon in the valley of Megiddon." † Touching indeed is the prayer, given us in Isaiah lxiii. 15—lxiv., in which, at that time, they will humbly confess their sin, and implore the Lord's interposition. Well may it be so when, in the midst of their awful misery and

17—20: "Thus saith the Lord God, Speak unto every feathered fowl, and to every beast of the field, Assemble yourselves, and come; gather yourselves on every side to My sacrifice that I do sacrifice for you, even a great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel, that ye may eat flesh, and drink blood. Ye shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth. . . . Thus ye shall be filled at My table with horses and chariots, with mighty men, and with all men of war, saith the Lord God." Our Lord, when speaking of the suddenness of His coming at the judgment day, likens it to the ubiquitous vulture's swoop from giddy heights, where, seeing but unseen, it is ever in readiness to precipitate itself in a few seconds on the carcase below. (Luke xvii. 37.)

* Revelation xix. 17—21.

† Zechariah xii. 10, 11.

despair, they shall see Jesus of Nazareth appear as their deliverer on Mount Olivet, and call to mind that this is He whom their fathers crucified, and whom they have neglected and despised. All real sorrow for sin comes from the sight of a crucified Saviour. But what remorse and bitterness will be theirs. "This is the deepest sorrow for sin that will ever agonise the human heart."

But all will be then forgiven; of that time Jehovah-Jesus declares, "I will extend peace to her like a river. . . . As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem."* This will be the first recorded keeping of Israel's year of jubilee, for Christ will proclaim to them "the acceptable year of the Lord," and "comfort all that mourn."† Yea, He will give to all His attendant saints this happy ministry of consolation, charging them, "Comfort ye, comfort ye My people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned."‡ The Shepherd's first purpose in the gathering will now be accomplished, His righteous threatenings will be fulfilled, His justice satisfied, and the way prepared for a more eminent display of His mercy. It is of this time that He has said, "I, even I, will both search My sheep, and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he

* Isaiah lxvi. 12, 13.

† Isaiah lxi. 2.

‡ Isaiah xl. 1, 2.

is among his sheep that are scattered ; so will I seek out My sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. . . . I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be. . . . I will feed My flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord God. I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick : but I will destroy the fat and the strong ; I will feed them with judgment. . . . Therefore will I save My flock, and they shall no more be a prey ; . . . and I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even My servant David ; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. . . . And I will make with them a covenant of peace, and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land : and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods. And I will make them and the places round about My hill a blessing ; and I will cause the shower to come down in his season ; there shall be showers of blessing." *

* Ezekiel xxxiv. 11, 12, 14—16, 22—26.

CHAPTER IV.

THE FOLD COMPLETE.

It is at the time of this mighty deliverance that we must place the second stage of Israel's "gathering," viz. the conversion of all the Jews throughout the world, and their restoration to the Holy Land. In the first instance, as we have seen, when they are restored for punishment only a portion of the nation, "one of a city and two of a family," will be brought to Zion. This first partial return is to be effected by natural means, but their full return from every land as believers, "when none of them shall be left any more among the heathen,"* will be attended with miraculous interposition; indeed, it will be in itself the most wonderful miracle that the world has ever witnessed. This thing will not be done in a corner. Jewish heralds from Palestine will visit every shore, and carry to their brethren the glad tidings of Christ's salvation. Jehovah declares, "I will set a sign among them, and I will send those that escape of them unto the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, to Tubal, and Javan, to the isles

* Ezekiel xxxix. 28.

afar off, that have not heard My fame, neither have seen My glory; and they shall declare My glory among the Gentiles. And they shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the Lord out of *all nations* upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon *swift beasts*, to My holy mountain Jerusalem, saith the Lord, as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel into the house of the Lord." * Its publicity is often referred to, as in Isaiah xviii. 8, 7: "All ye inhabitants of the world, and dwellers on the earth, see ye, when he lifteth up an ensign on the mountains; and when he bloweth a trumpet, hear ye. . . . In that time shall the present be brought unto the Lord of Hosts of a people scattered and peeled." It will, as we have already seen, resemble, while it will eclipse in wonders, the exodus from Egypt: "According to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt will I show unto him marvellous things. The nations shall see and be confounded at all their might: they shall lay their hand upon their mouth, their ears shall be deaf. They shall lick the dust like a serpent, they shall move out of their holes like worms of the earth: they shall be afraid of

* Is. lxvi. 19, 20. The word translated "swift beasts," כִּרְכָּרִית, which occurs only in this passage, is confessedly obscure. It would seem, from the natural derivation, to mean circles, or "circles within circles," and has by many been supposed to refer to railway trains. A very similar allusion is made in reference to the means of transport of the troops which shall be arrayed against restored Israel. "Behold, they shall come with speed swiftly, . . . their wheels like a whirlwind." (Isaiah v. 26—28.)

the Lord our God, and shall fear because of Thee." *
 "Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that they shall no more say, The Lord liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, The Lord liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land." †

It is at this time that the ten lost tribes will be recognised and recovered. The Scriptural accounts of Israel's complete restoration carefully preserve the distinction between "the dispersed of Judah" and "the outcasts of Israel." ‡ The ten tribes called the "House of Israel," "Joseph," and "Ephraim," have had, as a body, a very different lot during the last 2,400 years from that of their brethren of Judah and Benjamin. They have been preserved from the guilt and punishment in which the Jews have been righteously involved by the formal rejection of Messiah, and have been for the most part entirely hidden, and will continue so until the time of their return. This is implied in that passage of Isaiah where their restoration is so graphically described in the address to Zion or Judah: "Lift up thine eyes round about, and

* Micah vii. 15—17.

† Jeremiah xxxiii. 7, 8. See also the passages on pages 3—5, which apply chiefly to this stage of Israel's restoration.

‡ Isaiah xi. 11, 12; Jeremiah iii. 18, xxxi. 31; Ezekiel xxxvii. 16, 19; Zechariah x. 6—8.

behold : all these gather themselves together, and come to thee. As I live, saith the Lord, thou shalt surely clothe thee with them all, as with an ornament, and bind them on thee, as a bride doeth. For thy waste and thy desolate places, and the land of thy destruction shall even now be too narrow, by reason of the inhabitants. . . The children which thou shalt have, after thou hast lost the other, shall say again in thine ears, The place is too strait for me : give place to me that I may dwell. Then shalt thou say in thine heart, *Who hath begotten me these, seeing I have lost my children, and am desolate, a captive, and removing to and fro ? and who hath brought up these ? Behold, I was left alone ; these, where had they been ?* " * The Gentiles are to be specially instrumental in bringing back Israel, and appear also to take the same part in the case of the Jews residing in foreign lands, who are to be converted by the mission of their Palestine brethren.† Then the two streams of Jacob's seed, so long parted by Ephraim's rebellion against the throne of David, will reunite under Messiah, and mingle in one mighty flood, never more to flow in sundered channels. What David lost in Rehoboam he will regain in Christ. Therefore the prophet Ezekiel was bidden "take thee one stick, and write upon it, for Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions (Benjamin) : then take another stick and write upon it for Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and

* Isaiah xlix. 18—21.

† Isaiah xi. 11—14, xlix. 22, 23, lvi. 19, 20.

for all the house of Israel his companions : and join them one to another into one stick ; and they shall become one in thine hand." And this is explained to signify : " Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land : and I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel ; and one king shall be king to them all ; and they shall be *no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all.* . . . And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt ; and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children's children, for ever ; and my servant David shall be their prince for ever." *

It is noticeable that there is a well-marked order in these events. Jerusalem will be saved first, when Christ descends upon Olivet, then Judah, or the Jews at large at the commencement of His reign, and shortly afterwards the House of Israel, the ten tribes which have been outcasts from the land since the day that Hoshea carried them away captive to Halah and Habor. Thus it is written, " I will bring it (Jerusalem) health and cure ; . . . and I will cause the captivity of Judah and the captivity of Israel to return, and will build them, as at the first." †

* Ezekiel xxxvii. 16—25.

† Jeremiah xxxiii. 6, 7.

Bright beyond conception are the pictures drawn by the prophets of the happy time that follows immediately upon Israel's conversion and miraculous deliverance. It would seem as if the Holy Spirit delighted to dwell on the glorious theme. It is the golden age. It is the time for which the whole sin-blighted "creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." When the seventh trumpet sounds, "the mystery of God," the gracious mystery of redeeming love, shall be finished ; yea, great voices in heaven, of the heralds of the "King Immortal," will proclaim, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ ; and He shall reign for ever and ever."* And Israel, happy Israel ! saved by the Lord, first amidst these kingdoms, and high over them all, will shine in the light of God, a mighty witness to the truth and a blessed power for good throughout the ransomed world.† Therefore Jehovah speaks to every heart : "Be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create : for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in My people : and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her."‡ To "His own" He cries : "Sing, O daughter of Zion ; shout, O Israel ; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. The Lord hath taken away

* Rev. xi. 15—17, x. 7.

† Isaiah xlix. 22, 23, lx. 12, lxi. 5, 6, 9—11 ; Zephaniah iii. 19, 20.

‡ Isaiah lxxv. 18, 19.

thy judgments, He hath cast out thine enemy : the king of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of thee : thou shalt not see evil any more. . . . The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty ; He will save, He will rejoice over thee with joy ; He will rest in His love ; He will joy over thee with singing. . . . And I will get them praise and fame in every land where they have been put to shame.”* This is the secret of their abundant peace, and mighty exaltation,—“ the King of Israel, even the Lord,” will be in the midst of them. Nathaniel in the moment of his conversion cried, “ Rabbi, thou art the King of Israel ;” and, constrained by that “ Truth ” which he despised, the mocking Roman Governor wrote over His cross the imperishable title, “ Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews.” The angel who announced His birth to Mary, declared : “ Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call His name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest : and the Lord God shall give unto Him *the throne of His father David : and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever ; and of His kingdom there shall be no end.*”† Many more passages, equally plain, might be added from the New Testament. The Old Testament abounds with explicit statements on this subject. When Jesus comes to earth it will be to “ reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before His ancients gloriously.”‡ Well may Israel be

* Zephaniah iii. 14- 19. † Luke i. 31 32. ‡ Isaiah xxiv. 23.

first of the nations upon earth under the personal rule of her Divine Lord. Christ, it is true, will have universal dominion, reigning "from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth ;" yea, "all kings shall fall down before Him ; all nations shall serve Him," but the seat of His government will be in Jerusalem, which He Himself has been pleased to call "the city of the Great King."* Ezekiel sums up all the glories of the earthly Zion in this one word : "The name of the city, from that day, shall be JEHOVAH SHAMMAH, THE LORD IS THERE."

O thou deeply ruined Zion, my heart is filled with gladness to know that thou shalt yet be called "the city of the Lord, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel!" "Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee," Jesus thy Saviour hath declared, "I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations. And thou shalt know that I the Lord am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob. . . The sun shall be no more thy light by day ; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee : but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory."† The Lord "hasten it in His time !"

O God, what glory shall be Thine in the conversion and salvation, the restoration and glory of long-lost Israel ! Verily then shall the heathen know that Thou art the Lord, when Thou shalt thus be sanctified

* Psalm lxxii. ; Matthew v. 35.

† Isaiah lx. 14—19.

in Jacob before their eyes !* “What riches of forbearance, patience, long-suffering, and faithfulness will it manifest in our heavenly Father ! How wonderful the glories of His electing love in once rebellious, and then recovered Israel ! What efficacy in our Redeemer's blood ! What a prevalency in His intercession for His worst and bitterest enemies ! What omnipotent energy and grace in the Holy Ghost, by His overcoming all their infidelity, prejudices, and obstinacy ! Oh, what a bright and valuable jewel in the Redeemer's “many crowns” at the latter day will be converted Israel, holy and joyful in their own land ! . . With what rapturous hosannas will the Jewish nation sing those psalms already prepared for their use, and call upon each other : ‘O sing unto the Lord a new song ; for He hath done marvellous things : His right hand, and His holy arm, hath gotten Him the victory. The Lord hath made known His salvation : His righteousness hath He openly showed in the sight of the heathen. He hath remembered His mercy and His truth towards the house of Israel : all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.’ ”†

With the reign of Christ, many material changes will take place in Palestine. The prophets abound with references to these. The climate will be greatly improved. There will be no longer the drought occasioned by irregularity in the fall of rain. In one picture

* Ezekiel xxxvi. 23, xxxix. 7—22.

† Psalm xlviii. 1—3.

of that time Isaiah tells us : " Then shall He give the rain of thy seed ; " and Joel : " He will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month." * Water, now so much needed for the purposes of irrigation and pasture, will then be abundantly supplied. " There shall be upon every high mountain, and upon every high hill, rivers and streams of water." And again : " I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys." " All the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters." † The land will be restored to its ancient marvellous fertility. " Bread of the increase of the earth " shall be fat and plenteous ; " in that day shall thy cattle feed in large pastures." " The mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk." " The floors shall be full of wheat, and the fats shall overflow with wine and oil." " Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be esteemed as a forest," in the day that the very " fruitful trees " shall praise the Lord. ‡ The wide and terrible deserts that now hem in the Holy Land upon the north, east, and south will be removed. While Israel were appointed in " the times " of " ignorance " to preserve the knowledge of the true God amidst surrounding darkness and idolatry, these deserts served

* Isaiah xxx. 23 ; Joel ii. 23.

† Isaiah xxx. 25, xli. 18 ; Joel iii. 18.

‡ Isaiah xxx. 23 ; Joel iii. 18, ii. 24 ; Isaiah xxix. 17 ; Psalm cxlviii. 9.

as a natural fence around the Lord's vineyard. But when they are a saved nation in the midst of an awe-stricken and God-fearing world the barrier, no longer needed, will be taken away. When the Lord "shall comfort Zion: He will comfort all her waste places; and He will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord." He declares, "I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert. The beast of the field shall honour Me, the jackals and the owls: because I give waters in the wilderness and rivers in the desert, to give drink to My people, My chosen." "I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water. I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the acacia tree, and the myrtle, and the oil tree; I will set in the desert the fir tree, and the pine, and the box tree together." And again: "The wilderness, and the solitary place, shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. . . The glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon. . . . And the mirage shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water."*

* Isaiah li. 3, xliii. 19, 20, xli. 18, 19, xxxv. 1, 2, 7: שָׂרָב (Sharab), Isaiah xxxv. 7, translated in the Authorised version "parched ground," answers exactly to the Arabic "sarab" or "mirage." It is caused by the hot rays of the sun refracted at midday on the glowing sands, and has the mocking appearance of a cool and beautiful sheet of water, surrounded by trees, &c. The author became familiar with the *sharab* when crossing the singularly arid deserts that lie between Damascus and Palmyra, and can well realise

Enormous tracts of new land will thus miraculously be brought under cultivation, and sufficient habitable space will be afforded to accommodate the vast multitudes of restored Israel. The fresh distribution of this country amongst the twelve tribes at the time in question is shown in the last chapter of Ezekiel. The inheritances are to be in strips of equal size, running across the land from east to west. Then the full grant to Abraham will be given as the permanent possession of his descendants. This was enjoyed in Solomon's days, for a brief moment, when he "reigned over all kingdoms from the river (Euphrates) . . . unto the border of Egypt." Towards the centre of the land will be the portion "called the Holy oblation," some fifty or sixty miles square, set apart for the Holy City and its suburbs, and the lands of the "Prince," the priests, and the Levites. Seven tribes are to inherit on the one side of the sacred strip, and five on the other. The tribe next to it on the north is to be Judah, while their faithful companions, the tribe of Benjamin, will hold the place of honour on the south.* It has been not unreasonably conjectured

the blessed and miraculous change that is to convert such burning and barren spots into pools of living water, fringed with a rich growth of vegetation, and spreading verdure over a wide extent of irrigated land.

* Ezekiel xlvi. : "There are just thirteen equal distances on the breadth of the future promised land, one for the oblation and twelve for the tribes, according to Ezekiel xlvi." Allowing fifty miles square for the Lord's Holy oblation (Ezekiel xlvi. 8—22), (twenty-five miles north of Jerusalem and twenty-five miles south) ; there are

that when "the wilderness" is miraculously removed, these strips from west to east will be carried in parallel portions through the wide Arabian Desert, so as to give each of the tribes a coast line on the Mediterranean Sea and the Indian Ocean. A glance at the map will explain this, and show at once what an immense tract of country they would then occupy. Nor let it be an insuperable difficulty to any in the way of this arrangement that the genealogies of Jewish families are lost. The dispensation opening with this resettlement of Israel is plainly to be once more a dispensation of the miraculous. It was long ago revealed to Ezra, that a priest "with Urim, and with Thummim," would one day stand up, and the missing genealogies would be thus recovered.*

Nowhere will these changes be more remarkable than in the Holy City, Jerusalem. When the Saviour's feet again press the Mount of Olives, "the Mount shall cleave in the midst thereof towards the east and towards the west," forming a very great valley, which will alter the whole features of the country. It is also declared that the "valley of the Mountains shall reach unto Azal."† This Azal has been conjectured to be Ascalon on the Mediterranean, and to some it has seemed that the formation of this

besides just seven spaces of fifty miles each from Jerusalem northward to the Euphrates, and five spaces of fifty miles each southward to the Red Sea.

* Ezra ii. 62, 63; Nehemiah vii. 64, 65.

† Zechariah xiv. 3—5.

valley to Jerusalem will be with a view to admit the ocean waters from the west to the Dead Sea. These, it has been supposed, will overflow by the southern end of the lake, and sweep away the sand-drift that now in the Wady Arabah alone obstructs the progress of the waters, so "completing the straits of Azal into the Red Sea." Thus would Jerusalem be made at once the very centre of the earth, and become the emporium of the commerce of the east and west ; for the water transit now so imperfectly provided by the Suez Canal would be amply afforded by this natural arm of the ocean. It is certain that a copious stream will arise from a fountain opened at this time in the centre of the Temple area, which will flow through the mountains into the Dead Sea, and give life to the now sterile wilderness of Judea. A full description of this is given in Ezekiel xlvii., where the main idea is that of the rapid augmentation of the waters "from a petty stream into a mighty river, not by the influx of side streams, but by its own self-supply from the sacred miraculous source in the Temple." It would also seem as if this spring will flow in another channel to the "hinder," that is, the Western, or Mediterranean sea.*

The site of Zion, too, will be greatly raised and extended. When Ezekiel described in vision the city

* Zechariah xiv. 8. An Eastern in noting the points of the compass looks east ; south, therefore, is "the right hand," north "the left hand," east "before," and west "behind."

to which he saw "the glory of the God of Israel" return "from the way of the east," he tells us "in the visions of God brought He me into the land of Israel, and set me upon *a very high mountain*, by which was as the frame of a city on the south."* Isaiah and Micah both declare, that in "the last days, the mountain of the Lord's House shall be established in *the top of the mountains*, and shall be exalted above the hills,"† and Zion at the time when her "iniquity is pardoned" is bidden to get "up into *the high mountain*."‡ Its extension as well as its exaltation is declared by Zechariah: "All the land shall be turned as a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem; and it shall be lifted up, and inhabited in her place, from Benjamin's gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananeel unto the King's wine-presses, and men shall dwell in it, and there shall be no more utter destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited."§ A space of "twenty-five thousand reeds," that is, fifty, or as some suppose sixty square miles, is to be left in the centre of the land around Jerusalem, for "an oblation unto the Lord," or "Holy portion," which is to bear a specially sacred character throughout.¶ This large tract assigned around "the sanctuary" to the use of the priests and Levites seems to imply a city proportionately

* Ezekiel xl. 2.

† Isaiah ii. 2; Micah iv. 1.

‡ Isa. xl. 9. See also Ezek. xvii. 22, 23, &c. § Zech. xiv. 10, 11.

¶ A "full reed" = "six great cubits" (Ezekiel xli. 8), but the size of the "great cubit" is not certainly known.

grand. We are expressly told that there will be three gates in each of the four walls, named in order after the twelve tribes, and that it will be a square of four thousand five hundred "measures," but what the value of this "measure" is we do not know.*

We may best judge of its size by the magnitude of the splendid temple that is to be reared in its midst. The area of this temple is to be a square of 500 reeds, equal to 2,000 yards in all; a space of more than a square mile.† That a literal structure is intended in the last nine chapters of the Book of Ezekiel it seems difficult to doubt. The minute particulars as to the measurements of its various parts, and the privileges and duties of those who are to take part in its worship, all point one way. The difficulties that may appear in the way of its literal interpretation are few, but if it be taken figuratively it is confessed that "the minute and accurate details seem meaningless and needless," and fail in fact to have any significance. Let none be surprised or offended at a return to sacrifices.‡ These sacrifices are distinctly different from the Mosaic. They will be no longer the "beggary elements of legal types," liable to be misunderstood

* Ezekiel xlviii. 30—35.

† Ezekiel xlii. 16—20.

‡ Both the Temple and its ritual of sacrifice are referred to in Isaiah as existing during the Millennium. "All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto thee, the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee: they shall come up with acceptance on Mine altar, and I will glorify the house of My glory" (Isaiah lx. 7). See also Isaiah ii. 2; Micah iv. 1, 2.

and trusted in, as if efficacious in themselves. God has declared of all who believe in Jesus, "their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." Now where remission of these is "there is no more offering for sin," for by "one offering Christ hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." * The ignoring of this truth is one of the greatest heresies of the Romish and Greek apostasies. But we may rest assured that there will be nothing in the Temple worship of the future to rob Christ of His glory. The Jews as a nation stand in a different relation to God as His peculiar people, from that of the "*elect Church, gathered out of Jews and Gentiles indiscriminately.*" While for us all sacrifices in any form have absolutely ceased, there is nothing to forbid the dispensation ushered in by Messiah's personal reign on earth, being "the period of public liturgy, or perfect outward worship of the great congregation on earth, as the present time is one of gathering out spiritual worshippers one by one." Their place in the ritual of the altar during the new dispensation seems plain. Just as the sacrifices of old *pointed forward* to Messiah's sufferings and atoning death, so those of that glorious time will *point back* to the same redeeming work. They will not only be thus commemorative, but will probably further serve to display the full excellence and hidden meaning of the Law of Moses, while having no propitiatory character. The Feasts of the Sabbath,

* Hebrews x. 14, 17, 18.

New Moon, Passover, and Tabernacles are especially to be observed.* The year of Jubilee will be kept.† There is no mention of the ark. Indeed, we are expressly told of that time, "in those days, saith the Lord, they shall say no more, The Ark of the Covenant of the Lord ; neither shall it come to mind, neither shall they remember it, neither shall they visit it, neither shall that be done any more."‡ Christ Himself will reign in Zion with manifested glory, and that part of the furniture of the House of the Lord which chiefly symbolised His presence will henceforth be unnecessary. There will be a civil ruler of the nation described as "the Prince," who is specially spoken of as offering up sacrifice on certain occasions in connection with Divine worship.§

Human life will again be lengthened, as in the days before the Flood. "The child shall die a hundred years old," and death at this premature age will occur as a judgment upon sin. The people for the most part will live as long as the trees they plant, "for as the days of a tree are the days of My people, and Mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands."|| Amongst the circumstances that will then be peculiarly favourable to longevity must be noticed the entire cessation of violence. There will be an end of strife and confusion amongst Israel themselves, for God will make their "officers peace and their exactors

* Ezekiel xlv. 17—25. † Ezekiel xlvi. 16, 17. ‡ Jeremiah iii. 16.

§ Ezekiel xlv. 3, xlv. 7, 17, 22, xlvi. 2—18. || Isaiah lxx. 20—22.

righteousness."* War shall no more spread its alarms from without. When Jehovah has judged the nations "they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."† The very fierceness of the animal creation shall be completely subdued: "The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat chopped straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent's meal. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, saith the Lord."‡

Great, however, as the material blessings which will abound during Christ's reign on earth, the essential glory of the kingdom will be its *holiness*. This is everywhere in the Bible its distinguishing mark. Then at last will the prayer, so often tremblingly preferred, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven" be answered in its fullest extent. Israel shall be called "the holy people." "Thy people shall be all righteous," yea, they will be "trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord that He might be glorified."§ Jehovah says to "the Redeemer," His own Divine Son, who always represents the ideal Israel: "My Spirit that is upon Thee, and My words which I have put in Thy mouth, shall not depart out of Thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of Thy seed, nor out of the mouth of Thy seed's seed, . . . from henceforth and

* Isaiah lx. 17.

† Isaiah ii. 4; Micah iv. 3.

‡ Isaiah lxxv. 25, xi. 6—9.

§ Isaiah lxii. 12, lx. 21, lxi. 3.

for ever.”* Jerusalem shall be “a city of truth,” the “habitation of justice and mountain of holiness.”† Her very walls shall be called Salvation, and her gates Praise.‡ It is declared of the Holy City, when she shall thus be made “a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord,” “the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness.”

When all Israel are thus saved, the receiving of them back shall be as “life from the dead” to a lost world.§ The chosen people are represented at this time as a blessing to the whole earth. “The remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people, as a dew from the Lord, as the showers upon the grass.”|| They will be as a tree long withered, but now reviving and yielding abundantly, and filling the world with fruit.¶ The very gathering of Israel when Jehovah brings them back from every land will be a mighty display of His salvation in the sight of the heathen. It has been well asked, “How can they be gathered from the Niger to the Volga, from remotest China in the east to Portugal in the west, and from each accessible country of North and South America, without moving every land, and making known through the earth the wonderful works of God?” Doubtless they will afterwards be employed by Messiah as His missionaries to the heathen. The glorious result of their labours is presented to us in many a glowing picture, such as

* Isaiah lix. 21.

† Zechariah viii. 3; Jeremiah xxxi. 23.

‡ Isaiah lx. 18.

§ Romans xi. 15.

|| Micah v. 7.

¶ Isaiah vi. 13.

that contained in the seventy-second Psalm, where even the Bedawin Arab bows the knee to Christ.*

Indeed, we are specially told that all the nations of the earth shall come up formally once every year at the Feast of Tabernacles "to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts," in Jerusalem,† while pilgrims from the end of the earth will be constantly present at all the solemn Temple services.‡ The nations will, it may be conjectured, come up in the persons of their chosen representatives, an event not at all impracticable apart from miraculous agency. No rain shall fall upon any of the families of the earth who may refuse thus to come before the Lord, and if rainless Egypt neglect this duty her punishment shall be the plague.§ Who shall describe the solemn assemblies at the annual Feast of Tabernacles, when Jehovah will be visibly worshipped in the beauty of holiness, and the service, led by Israel, will be responded to by countless multitudes of every kindred and tongue! The spacious dimensions of Ezekiel's grand temple, which at first sight appears ideal from its very magnitude, are thus seen to be absolutely necessary to accommodate the mighty congregation. In the temple as it formerly stood there was an outer court, into which alone the Gentiles could come, but in the future temple no such barrier shall exist. Since Jesus has broken down the middle wall of partition Jews and

* Psalm lxxii. 9, 10.

† Isaiah lxvi. 23

‡ Zechariah xiv. 16.

§ Zechariah xiv. 17—19.

Gentiles are no longer separated, and in the millennium sanctuary all will meet alike. The Lord especially declares that after the pre-millennial judgment upon the world He will "turn to the nations a pure language."* It would seem from this and other scriptures that the confusion of Babel will at such time be removed, and man will again speak one tongue, most probably ancient Hebrew, a pure, vigorous, sacred speech. In Zephaniah the promise is specially mentioned in connection with the need of this for the purpose of united Divine worship: "Then will I turn to the people a pure language, that *they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve Him with one consent.*"

The inauguration of this happy state will be the commencement of the millennium. The millennium means a thousand years. It is the name given to the period of peace and blessing which this earth is to enjoy under the reign of Messiah, when that kingdom for which we are taught daily to pray shall have fully come. It is very definitely foretold in the Revelation that Satan is to be bound "a thousand years, . . . that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled." During this time the martyrs and saints will live and reign with Christ, but the rest of the dead will not live again until the thousand years are finished. "This is the first resurrection."† Consistently with the "year-

* Zephaniah iii. 9.

† Revelation xx. 1—5.

day" or "historical" principle, this period may be considered one of 360,000 literal years. During its long Sabbath of rest, earth will be gradually renewed, and the short 6,000 years of sin and suffering in which Satan's malice has involved the world will dwindle to a point, be swallowed up and forgotten. There may be at its close, in keeping with former chronological prophecies, a special era of a literal "thousand years" of more intense and glorious rest. The great length of human life during its continuance, the importance everywhere attached to it in Scripture, and the vast work of preparation to be done amongst the nations of the earth while it endures, all seem to point to the longer period. On the other hand, the great majority of sound interpreters accept the expression only in its literal sense.

The millennium is the "day of the Lord." * Peter specially explains that "one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." † It is that "day in the which He will judge the world in righteousness, by that Man whom He hath ordained." ‡ It has been usual to say from Zechariah xiv. 7, that this day has "a morning and an evening," and to represent the morning as coming first. This misapprehension has arisen from the essential difference between the Eastern and Western way of reckoning time. A day in Palestine always begins at

* Zechariah xiv. 6, 7; 2 Peter iii. 10—12.

† 2 Peter iii. 8.

‡ Acts xvii. 31.

sunset with *the evening*, and closes with the sunset of the next day. This is alluded to in the very first chapter of the Bible. We are there repeatedly informed that "*the evening and the morning were*" the day in question. The figure of the "day" of the Lord naturally follows the usual computation of time, and commences with "the evening." But even its darkest period will be bright in comparison with any previous dispensation. Therefore the prophet Zechariah, speaking of its first hours, declares: "It shall come to pass that at evening time it shall be light."* At this, its evening commencement, will take place, as we have seen, the "resurrection of the just." Only those who have believed in Jesus and found pardon through His blood, both under the old and new covenants, will then rise. Paul knew this, for he teaches it in several of his Epistles.† He calls this resurrection, when speaking to Agrippa, "the promise made of God unto our fathers," to which, instantly serving God day and night, they hope to come; ‡ while to the Philippians he declares that he counts all things but loss and dung to win Christ, if by any means he "*might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.*" § A special resurrection is evidently promised by our Lord to the righteous. Services rendered

* Zechariah xiv. 7.

+ 1 Corinthians xv. 23, 24, 51—56; 1 Thessalonians iv. 14—18
2 Thessalonians i. 7—10.

† Acts xxvi. 6, 7.

§ Philippians iii. 8—11

to His poor now shall be rewarded "at the resurrection of the just." * Those who are not of the world shall be "counted worthy to obtain" "the resurrection from amongst the dead," and are therefore in a pre-eminent degree "the children of the resurrection." † Three times in the sixth chapter of St. John, Jesus says specially of each one of His people, "I will raise him up at the last day." ‡ In the twentieth chapter of Revelation the fulfilment of this promise comes first, and stands as an event by itself at the commencement of the millennium, where it is especially said the "rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." § Then, after this long interval, towards the close of the "day of the Lord," we are told of the "great white throne," and of the "dead, small and great," i.e. "the rest of the dead," standing before God, which seems from the whole description the awful "resurrection to damnation." || Sin, which continues to exist during the millennium, will then be for ever subdued, for the devil, who has hitherto deceived mankind, will meet his final doom, and be "cast into the lake of fire and brimstone." ¶

The bright and dazzlingly glorious future of the

* Luke xiv. 14.

† Luke xx. 34—36.

‡ John vi. 40, 44, 54. See also ver. 39. § Revelation xx. 4—6.

|| Revelation xx. 11—15. This distinction is carefully preserved in that deeply important discourse on the Resurrection, 1 Corinthians xv. : "*Every man in his own order; Christ the first fruits; afterwards they that are Christ's at His coming. Then cometh the end*" (vv. 23, 24).

¶ Revelation xx. 7—15.

risen Church we cannot further follow. Their place will be in the New Jerusalem, which, upon a comparison of the description in Revelation xxi. with that of the closing chapters of Ezekiel appears evidently different from the earthly Jerusalem.* There they will "reign in life" with Christ as kings and priests unto God. The Saviour will distribute to each his rich reward—his crown of glory. They are to have dominion over various kingdoms throughout the universe, and, we read in one place, "to reign on the earth."† To this world they will attend the Saviour when He comes to set up His kingdom ; indeed, the saints will possess it with Him.‡ Doubtless on errands of mercy they will often revisit those regions over which Messiah will appoint them as His vicegerents, and minister to the comfort and glory of earth's inhabitants. Then "the nations shall walk in the light" of the New Jerusalem, and the saints, as "the kings of the earth," shall ever be returning from time to time to "bring their glory and honour into it." §

* For instance, in the earthly Jerusalem of Ezekiel there is to be a grand temple (Ezekiel xl.—xli.), but in the heavenly Jerusalem of John we read, "I saw no temple therein" (Revelation xxi. 22). The literal city is to be 4,500 measures square (Ezekiel xlviii. 30—35), while the figurative Zion is to be of the enormous size of a cube of 12,000 furlongs or 1,500 miles (Revelation xxi. 16).

† Revelation v. 10; Matthew xxv. 21; Luke xii. 44, xxiii. 29.

‡ Daniel vii. 22—27.

§ Revelation xxi. 24. While it is true that the Lord Jesus will "reign in Mount Zion," as His people are to "reign on the earth," it does not follow that the Saviour, any more than His risen saints, will *constantly* reside here below. The "new" or heavenly Jerusalem is their home.

Let no Israelite think to say in his heart, "since the Christians admit that though we remain in unbelief we shall yet be saved as a nation when Messiah comes in glory, we may therefore safely wait till that time." What shall we say of those who thus lay themselves out to neglect, forsake, and betray their King in the hour when He has humbled Himself for their sakes, and purpose acknowledging Him when, in the day of His manifested power, they can no longer escape? Does not every right feeling of our nature cry shame on such a course? But let my Jewish readers know full well what a fearful risk they are thus running, and what an irreparable loss in any case such conduct must involve. When the Saviour comes in glory, it will be, as we have seen, to sit "as a refiner and purifier of silver," and "who may abide the day of His coming? . . . for He is like a refiner's fire."* *A third part of Israel only will be saved*; "in all the land two parts therein shall be cut off and die."† All those in rebellion against Jesus of Nazareth God will purge out of the flock.‡ We may reasonably suppose, in accordance with the righteous equity of all Jehovah's dealings, that the saved ones will be those who have lived in lands where they have not had a full opportunity of hearing the Gospel, and therefore have not, like Jewish dwellers in Protestant countries, openly rejected the truth. But more than this, even the remnant who are finally converted and established

* Mal. iii. 2, 3. † Zech. xiv 8, 9. ‡ Ezek. xx. 33—38.

in peace under the Abrahamic covenant, as it respects the land, will have a far less glorious and happy lot than those who, ere the completion of the number of His elect, have believed in Jesus, and, redeemed by His blood, have obtained a place in the Church of the first-born, "Jerusalem which is above." These, as "kings and priests unto God," are recompensed for light and momentary sufferings here by an "exceeding and eternal weight of glory," far more than earth's saved and happy myriads can ever know.

The millennium is the day of "the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit upon the throne of His glory." * At this time, according to God's promise, the saints are taught to "look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."† Speaking of Christ's millennial reign it is said in Isaiah, "Behold, I create new heavens, and a new earth."‡ In Revelation we are told at the close of the thousand years of "a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away."§ Sin and death were present in the prophet's picture,|| but when John beheld the same scene tears were for ever wiped away, and "there was no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither . . . any more pain."¶ We may conclude that Isaiah speaks of the beginning of "the regeneration," or making all things new, at the commencement of the millennium, and John of its

* Matthew xix. 28.

† 2 Peter iii. 13.

‡ Isaiah lrv. 17.

§ Revelation xxi. 1.

|| Isaiah lrv. 20.

¶ Revelation xxi. 4.

glorious completion when the "thousand years" are over. The fire which, as we have seen, will fall from heaven on the apostate Gentile world at the commencement of Christ's reign on earth would appear to fall again in another judgment at its close. For Satan shall be once more "loosed out of his prison," and shall "go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea."* Some have supposed that these are the countless masses of the dead heathen world raised on earth for judgment, who justify the righteousness and wisdom of God in their rejection by despising and trampling upon the truth, and who by an attack on restored Israel, and "the beloved city" (Jerusalem) display even amid millennial light a heart-hatred to the service of God. It may, however, be that evil, still lingering latent and repressed on the renewed earth, will break forth amongst its inhabitants once more, and that these are the rebellious multitudes described as rushing upon their own destruction. After this judgment, death appears to be finally abolished. Earth is to be peopled for ever with countless myriads of our race, from whose nature, by Christ's redeeming work, sin shall be everlastingly and entirely eradicated.† Upon the brightness

* Revelation xx. 7—10.

† "Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end (עַד-עוֹלָמִי יֵצֵר)." Isaiah xlv. 17). This very strong expression appears

of that future glory our eyes could not steadfastly look, and therefore but little of this state has been revealed. At that time, when the work of redeeming love is fully accomplished, Messiah's mediatorial reign will cease. "Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."*

In view of these things some very solemn practical thoughts arise.

BE YE READY !

None but the saved can be prepared for "the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." For the day of the Lord is "the time of the Lord's vengeance," yea, "the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled." There are many now,

plainly to imply eternal duration, for the prophet immediately adds, "He created it not in vain, He formed it to be inhabited" (v. 18). So the Jews understood the passage, and Maimonides argues the earth's everlasting continuance from Psalm civ. 5 : "He has founded the earth on its basis, that it should not be removed for ever and ever (עוֹלָם וָעֶד)," though this expression is less strong than that in Isaiah xlv. 17. Certainly "the earth abideth for ever" (Ecclesiastes i. 4), and in the ages to come, when the sword of the last enemy, death, shall be sheathed, Abraham's faith will be rewarded by beholding at length the perfect fulfilment of that remarkable promise, "*I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered*" (Genesis xiii. 16).

* 1 Corinthians xv. 24.

as in the days of Amos, who think of it as only a season of "joy and glory," and need the Divine warning, "Woe unto you that desire the day of the Lord! to what end is it for you? the day of the Lord is darkness, and not light."* Awake to the great realities of Eternity. Feel from your inmost soul "the powers of the world to come." "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Yield to the Holy Spirit's efforts to convince of sin. See your true case, your complete and hopeless ruin as a hell-deserving sinner. Give up your prejudices, your own thoughts and imaginations, your unscriptural trust in men or means. But do not stop there. Come to Jesus, savingly regard His finished work, see in His agonising sufferings and death your hope of escape from the wrath to come. Know with assurance that His death, the death of the Lamb of God, spoken of in Isaiah liii., was instead of yours. Believe that your sins were at Calvary laid by the Lord on Him, and that His righteousness, the righteousness of God, is reckoned to you. Hear and accept His invitation in the Gospel to the lost and sin-burdened, and therefore to you. Plead His promises as the ground of your acceptance. Call upon Him for the gift of His Holy Spirit. Honour Him by trusting His word with child-like simplicity, and committing your soul to His care. Do not rest short of being "born again," and experiencing a total change of heart and life. No

* Amos v. 18.

other preparation than being "in Christ" will avail to keep us from the fearful snares that are at hand, when superstition and infidelity shall join hands in Satan's last masterpiece, and shall deceive, if it were possible, even "the very elect."

Child of God, be in readiness by cultivating an unworldly spirit. We live in a knowledge-worshipping, ease-loving, honour-coveting, pleasure-seeking, money-getting, and money-trusting age. The increase of worldly wisdom, wealth, and luxury, and consequently of carelessness and carnal security, is untold. It behoves us with more than ordinary resolve in such an age to keep ourselves "unspotted from the world," a separate people, unmixed in its restless vanities, and uncontaminated by its God-dishonouring ways. Nothing will better help us to do this than "a clear scriptural view of the nearness of these great events of the tribulation of the Gentiles, and the personal coming of Christ, which are connected with the restoration of the Jews to their own land." "Riches profit nothing in the day of wrath." If all these things are so soon to be destroyed, how little importance should we attach to them; "seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?"* Above all things, let us beware of that nineteenth-century spirit of spurious liberalism, which is ever seeking outward peace by compromise of prin-

* 2 Peter iii. 11.

ciple, and either with the mean face of expediency or the assumed mask of charity, bids us cease to "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints." Let us dare to be amongst the number of those who, "in the simplicity that is in Christ," "rooted and built up in Him, and stablished in the faith," will not receive any other Gospel, "though an angel from heaven preach it unto us."* Then in the exercise of true holiness of heart and life, not seeking to be or to do anything great, but standing servant-like in the fulfilment of daily duty, and in the cultivation of a spirit of patient self-denial and readiness to suffer for righteousness' sake, we shall best prepare for "the tribulation—the great one," that will immediately precede the rapture of His people at the Saviour's coming.

TURN TO THE PRAYERFUL STUDY OF PROPHECY.

Let us lay deeply to heart the peculiar blessing pronounced on the perusal of the Revelation above all other portions of the New Testament: "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand."† Who can doubt that there is a special significance in the fact of this book being now for the first time introduced into the new lectionary of the Church of England, and thus publicly read throughout the

* Galatians i. 6—9.

† Revelation i. 3.

land in its Sabbath assemblies? It is as though a voice from heaven, just at the moment of time since the Reformation when it is most needed, was thus solemnly calling to some 20,000 ministers, and many millions of Protestant people, to discern "the signs of the times." Speaking of "the time of the end" in Daniel, the Lord declares, "None of the wicked shall understand; but *the wise shall understand.*"* God make us wise in this matter! "Let us beware of that willing ignorance (2 Peter iii. 5) respecting the day of Christ which is much condemned by the Spirit of God."

Let us hear the words of one who has written largely and well on this topic. "Say not," says Mr. Bickersteth, "these subjects are not practical and profitable. God, in His infinite wisdom, has occupied a large portion of His own holy work, the Bible, with these subjects; they cannot, then, be matters of indifference to the Church at any time. They are pregnant with spiritual instruction in every age; and much more are they important to us, who have reason to think that we are living in the close of the Gentile dispensation, and near the return of covenant blessings to the Jewish nation. If much insight into God's Word; if a just anticipation of the most awakening coming events; if quickening motives to watchfulness, prayer, and preparation for the Lord's coming; if a humble posture in a true

* Daniel xii. 10.

view of our situation as Gentile Christians ; if a lively and animating hope of approaching glory are of practical use in the Christian life—then is this subject eminently practical for our personal edification. If we would also be guarded against unfounded hopes in our labours for Jews and Gentiles, be preserved from bitter disappointment, and strengthened to patient perseverance, amidst all discouragements, in the scriptural assurance of a final and full blessing, then is this subject eminently helpful to true and patient zeal in supporting every scriptural effort for the salvation of Israel and all Gentile nations.” Of “varied interpretations,” which so discourage many, the same writer says, they “should excite us to increased and closer *investigation* ; the prophecy shall be so completed in the end of God’s dispensation, that we may compare it with its accomplishment, and fulfil the direction, and attain the promise, ‘Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read ; no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate :’ (Isaiah xxxiv. 16). So far from giving up the study because of its difficulties, we should only search the Scriptures more diligently. It is a just remark of Mr. Cunningham’s that ‘*No mistakes of honest inquiries into prophetic truth are so fatal as the error of neglecting and despising the spirit of prophecy, which is the testimony of Jesus*’ ” (Rev. xix. 10).

PRAY FOR ISRAEL.

“Ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence, and give Him no rest, till He establish, and till He make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.” Yes, “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem : they shall prosper that love thee.” * It has been well said, “This spirit has always distinguished the most devoted servants of Christ.” To know and believe God’s purposes with regard to His ancient people must lead all Gentiles to exclaim with their great Apostle, “My heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they may be saved.” Archbishop Leighton, in a sermon on Isaiah lx. 1, says : “*They forget a main point in the Church’s glory who pray not daily for the conversion of the Jews.*”

Memorable are the words which that wise and faithful minister, Charles Simeon, addressed to the Cambridge Undergraduates’ Missionary Association, from his dying bed : “The thing which I wish to bring before you is this :—Ought we, or ought we not, to resemble Almighty God in the things most near and dear to God Himself ? It has been the one object of my life to do so, and it is my dying prayer for you that you may do so also. Now, I ask, what is at this very moment God’s view of His ancient people, and His feelings towards them ? ‘I have delivered the *dearly beloved of my soul* into the hand

* Isaiah lxii. 6, 7 ; Psalm cxxii. 6.

of her enemies' (Jer. xii. 19). Are such *God's* feelings towards them even now? And ought not ours to resemble them? Have we no cause for shame, sorrow, and contrition, that we have resembled Him so little in past times? And again, commenting on the words, "I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for Mine holy Name's sake," &c.,* he solemnly inquires: "Now I ask, let the *Jews* be ever so insignificant, that we do nothing for their sakes, ought not the glory of God's '*holy Name*' to be as dear to us as it is to Him? Are there *no obligations* lying upon us on this ground?" Deep, indeed, should be the compassion we feel "towards our elder brother, Israel. Think of their past sufferings; think of their coming anguish and mourning. Think that we have been received through their rejection; by their fall salvation is come to us. And if one spark of ingenuous feeling be left in our bosom, it must fill us with tender emotions of sympathy and commiseration for our long-rejected brethren of the house of Israel."

Great and unparalleled as their trials are to be, the nation will be preserved, and all the awful discipline their unbelief demands will prove purifying. God will redeem them from their enemies, He will pass by the transgression of the remnant of His heritage; He will build up Zion, and appear in

* Ezekiel xxxvi. 22—24.

His glory.* When Israel are converted as a nation, then shall the other nations of the earth be saved ; “for the Gentiles shall come to their light, and kings to the brightness of their rising.” Let our holy resolve, amid every discouragement, be that of our Saviour Himself: “For Zion’s sake will I not hold My peace, and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.”†

LOOK FOR THE LORD’S APPEARING.

It is the great hope of the Church. The “looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ,” has cheered His people during all the dark eighteen-centuried night of their affliction ; but how much more should it strengthen and encourage our hearts who know that the day is immediately at hand. “The salvation of Israel is connected with the coming of the Saviour.”‡ If we are faithful servants we must at this moment be waiting and watching for our Master’s return with renewed vigilance. When our Lord spoke of His second advent, the solemn lesson of the subject was, “Watch!”§ It has been

* Psalm cxxxvi. 24 ; Micah vii. 18, 20 ; Psalm cii. 16.

† Isaiah lxii. 1.

‡ Isaiah xxxv. 4 ; Psalm cii. 16 ; Zechariah xiv. 3 ; Micah ii. 13 ; Romans xi. 25.

§ Matthew xxiv. 42 ; Luke xxi. 36.

well said: "The *grand danger to be feared* in the varied interpretations of prophecy is a *state of slumber* as to the speedy, personal, and visible coming of Christ. Let us never forget that not merely the foolish virgins slumbered, but *the wise virgins* also." But the antidote to this evil is found in "the patient waiting for Christ," and the glad expectation of His return. God keep any of us from being led, through love of the world, to say in our hearts, "My Lord delayeth His coming." May we rather, like the Corinthians, "come behind in no gift, waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." * Amidst the confusion of all things religious and civil in these evil, lawless days, when through abounding iniquity the love of many waxes cold; and as we watch the terrible increase of this sad Laodicean state till it issue in universal apostasy; whilst men's hearts are "failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth," let us "look up, and lift up" our heads, for our redemption draweth nigh. *Christ is at hand*. But before His awful presence flashes on a guilty world, "the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." "For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be

* 1 Corinthians i. 7.

caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air." * "This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection." † And who are these blessed ones? Let every Jew, every Gentile, lay to heart the words of Paul in his letter to the Hebrews: "Unto them that *look for Him* shall He" (Christ once offered to bear the sins of many) "appear the second time without sin unto salvation." ‡

* 1 Thessalonians iv. 16, 17.

† Revelation xx. 6, 6.

‡ Hebrews ix. 28.

APPENDIX A.

SIGNS OF THE TIME OF THE END.

THE following are very briefly the principal signs of "the time of the end" given in the Scriptures :—

- I. The preaching of the Gospel in all lands, and great missionary activity. (Matthew xxiv. 14; Revelation xiv. 6.)
- II. The consuming of the Papal power, which was to last 1,260 years. (Daniel vii. 25, xii. 7; Revelation xi. 3—7.)
- III. Healing of "the wound by a sword" given to the seventh head of the "beast,"—the Napoleonic dynasty,—by its revival in a wide-spread form of democratic imperialism after its overthrow at Sedan in 1870. (Rev. xiii. 3, 12, 14, xvii. 9—11.)
- IV. The wasting away of the Turkish or Ottoman Empire, to be completed under the sixth vial. (Revelation xi. 14, xvi. 12.)
- V. An immense increase of knowledge, and the means and use of intercommunication. (Daniel xii. 4.)
- VI. A great ingathering to the Church of Christ. (Rev. vii. 9, 14; Isaiah xxvi. 9.)
- VII. Wide-spread and fearful immorality, with a profession of religion, hence a union of superstition and infidelity. (Matthew xxiv. 12; Luke xxi. 34; 2 Timothy iii. 1—5.)

VIII. Great and revived interest in the Holy Land and the Jews, and specially in missions to Israel. (Ezekiel xxxvii. ; Psalm cii. 18—16.)

IX. The return of the Jews in unbelief.

X. Great worldliness, carelessness, and carnal security, together with denial of the Saviour's personal pre-millennial coming. (Matthew xxiv. 87—89; Luke xvii. 26—30, xxi. 84—86; 1 Thessalonians v. 2, 8; 2 Peter iii. 8, 4.)

The above signs indicate the approach of the last time; the following will more immediately precede the Saviour's coming, and have yet to be looked for :—

- I. The death of Evangelical Protestantism in a union in apostasy of all Christian bodies, at a council to be held in Jerusalem, followed after three and a half years by its revival. (Revelation xi. 8—12, xiii. 11—18.)
- II. Great persecution of all true believers consequent on the decrees of this council, rapture of the living saints, and resurrection of the blessed dead at its close. (Revelation xiv. 18—16; Daniel xii. 1—8.)
- III. The rapid pouring out of the seven vials or terrific judgments on anti-Christian powers, ending with the destruction of the Papacy (Babylon) under the seventh. (Revelation xvi. 1—18.)
- IV. Great tribulation of the Jews in Palestine at the hands of Antichrist. (Jeremiah xxx. 8, 5, 6, 7—11; Ezekiel xxxviii. xxxix. ; Daniel xi. 41—45, xii. 1; Zechariah xiv.)
- V. Great social revolutions and the overthrow of ruling powers, described under the well-known symbols

of an earthquake, and the darkening of the sun, moon, and stars. (Matthew xxiv. 29 ; Luke xxi. 25, 26 ; Revelation xi. 19, xvi. 18.)

The coming of Christ to gather His elect takes place towards the close of the great persecution, during a time of outward peace. His coming in "the clouds of heaven" to save Israel, and to inflict judgment on the Gentile world, is apparently somewhat later amidst great convulsions. Both are parts of one and the same coming before the millennium.

APPENDIX B.

FARMING IN PALESTINE.

THAT farming in the Holy Land is a highly profitable occupation, notwithstanding the curse which yet rests on the country, appeared to me plain after I had resided but a short time in Palestine, and my own conclusions were confirmed from the unexceptionable witness of both European and Arab farmers, with whom I was in daily intercourse. The reasons for this are not far to find, and I have here very briefly recorded twelve, which have come under my own observation, and which I do not remember to have seen enumerated before. Farmers will well understand their significance. Let me earnestly commend them to the attention of all who have hitherto had any doubts as to the accuracy of the scriptural statements on the subject of Palestine's exuberant fertility, and the teeming populations which it maintained. They are as follows:—

1. *Labour is extremely cheap.*—The wages of ordinary labourers are—men, 5s. to 6s. a week; women, 3s. a week; boys and girls, 2s. These are considered good wages, and amply sufficient to enable them to live.

2. *The plough employed is extremely light.*—A man can carry it over his shoulder and walk miles with it to his home. Two diminutive oxen, or one mule, are amply sufficient to draw it. This plough, of one pattern and size, is used everywhere throughout Egypt and Syria, and it is evidently the same as in ancient times. It fully suffices for the work.

3. *There is no expenditure whatever for manure.*—No artificial dressing, or any requiring carting, is ever employed. That deposited by the beasts as they graze over the stubble lands, and the ashes of whatever is afterwards left to burn, appear to be all the manures the rich Syrian arable lands have ever needed or received.

4. *Horses, asses, oxen, and farm stock generally are very cheap.*—Horses cost from £8 to £10. Mules, £12 to £15. Camels £20 to £30. Asses, from £3 to £6. Oxen, from £8 to £15. Full-grown sheep, from 10s. to 16s., and goats still less.

5. *The keep of animals is very trifling.*—Their food consists principally of barley and chopped straw. Four horses may be kept on a farm at an annual cost of from £30 to £40. For oxen, very rich oil-cake is abundant, which can be obtained direct, while still dripping with oil, from the numerous *simsim** presses, but for the most part of the year they live and work on little else beside chopped straw! This is explained by the fact that animals, like their masters, require only the lightest and simplest food in a hot country.

6. *Harvest can always be gathered in without injury from wet.*—Rain is never known at harvest time. The weather in May is warm and dry, and remains so until the next October. Hence the farmer has never any anxiety or loss on this score.

7. *There is no need of stacking the crops.*—This follows from what has just been said on the subject of harvest. All the sheaves are carried on the backs of camels or asses to an *open floor*, some smooth rock surface in the middle of the fields, and are threshed, winnowed, &c., in the open air, at leisure, in the course of three or four months of

* Sesame, a kind of rape, giving the largest yield of almost any crop that is grown.

uniformly hot weather, during which no drop of rain falls.

8. *No farm buildings of any kind are required except the roughest and simplest cattle sheds, and no hedges, ditches, walls, or enclosures of any kind around the fields.*—The only store-houses that are absolutely needed are underground cisterns called *Sillohs*, in the shape of huge jars, which abound everywhere. These are alluded to in Jer. xli. 8. The lands are virtually undrained, and one farm or one field is marked off from another only by large rough stones, placed here and there at wide intervals along the boundary line. Hence the need of marking the heinousness of the crime of secretly tampering with these. This was done by all the people solemnly declaring, "Cursed is he that removeth his neighbour's landmark," when assembled in sacred conclave at Gerizim and Ebal.*

9. *The total amount of taxes is only a tithe of each year's produce.*—A slight additional tax has lately been levied as a house tax.

10. *The great fertility of ordinary arable lands.*—The heavy lands in some parts yield a hundred-fold ; at Siloam, for instance, and to the south of Gaza, in that region where it still retains the character it bore when "Isaac sowed in that land, and received in the same year an hundred-fold" (Gen. xxvi. 12).

11. *The still greater fertility of irrigated lands.*—These will bear four crops a year, and yield the combined products of England and Italy. Much more land could be thus cultivated if the ruined pools and aqueducts were repaired.

12. *The immense productiveness of fruit trees.*—The olive, vine, fig, apricot, and mulberry in the high lands are

* Deuteronomy xxvii. 17. See also xix. 14, Job xxiv. 2, and Proverbs xxii. 28.

excellent examples of the wealth that must once have been derived from this source, when the mountain terraces were all under cultivation. The olive, fig, and mulberry will thrive in the rockiest spots. The vine, which is carelessly left to trail along the ground, seems in some parts, such as the neighbourhood of Hebron, to turn to one huge mass of white grapes. In the hot plains oranges of very many kinds, lemon, citron, banana, and prickly pear, grown extensively as a hedge round the gardens, yield most abundantly.

In 1876 the price of the finest wheat in Palestine was about 4s. the bushel, and of the finest barley about 2s. 2d. In 1875 the price of wheat was the same, and of barley about 2s. 6d. the bushel.

APPENDIX C.

THE SCENERY OF PALESTINE.

THE Holy Land is undoubtedly beautiful. Travellers have brought home very contradictory accounts on this subject, but the thoughtful student of the Bible, the best work on Palestine, can only come to one conclusion. None can fail to notice the lofty strains of poetry and the bright and vivid imagery of the Old Testament. The scriptures of the prophets sparkle on every side with gems of natural beauty. The glowing Eastern imagination, led by the Spirit of God, wanders through fields whose varied splendours seem often to embarrass the choice. Now all is ruggedly grand. The everlasting hills, range above range, stand an emblem of changeless stability.* Crag and precipice, "the rock of ages," form mountain-holds of unassailable safety.† Below them wind dark defiles, where the lonely danger-haunted pass is the very valley of the shadow of death.‡ Now the scene changes, and all is surpassingly lovely. In one fair boundless prospect the valleys are spread forth beneath; murmuring streams flow at the foot of herb-scented hills; deep blue depths of mountain lake are seen; and far off, like a line of silver light, "the great sea westward."§ Trailing vines clothe terraced slopes, where the walks are scented by their

* Gen. xlix. 26; Ps. xxxvi. 6.

† Deut. xxxii. 15, 31, 37; Ps. xviii. 2, 31; Isa. xxvi. 4, xxxiii. 16.

‡ Ps. xxiii. 4. § Numb. xxiv. 6; Deut. xxxiv. 1-4; Cant. iv. 8.

fragrance and cooled by their shadow.* “Watered gardens,” a paradise of verdure, with “all manner of pleasant fruits,” lie at their feet.† Perfumed oleanders, springing on high amidst a rich undergrowth, fringe the banks of the watercourses.‡ There is foliage of every order, from the sycamore of the plain to the cedar of Lebanon. The acacia and broom brave the very sands of the desert, and the beauty of the olive adorns the rockiest glen.§ In happier situations there are groves of palm, balsam, orange, and pomegranate,|| while the fairest pictures of pastoral life border upon plains that smile with one wide field of ripening grain.¶ Hence it is natural to infer that the features of the Holy Land correspond to these rich figures so constantly employed by its writers.

But we are not left to a mere inference in this matter, however forcible, for the Word of God furnishes plain statements to the same effect. Daniel calls Palestine “the glorious land;” the margin has it “the land of ornament, or the goodly land.”** This might, however, be ascribed by some to its spiritual privileges; but Ezekiel, speaking still more clearly, calls it “a land . . . flowing with milk and honey, which is the glory of all lands.”†† Moses said, “The Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; . . . *thou shalt not lack anything in it.*”‡‡ And Rabshakeh, on behalf of his wealthy master, the King of Assyria, who boasted of having conquered “all countries,” could hold out no richer prospect, if Jerusalem

* Ps. lxxx. 8—15; Cant. ii. 13; Isa. v. 1—7.

† Cant. iv. 12—16, vii. 13; Isa. lviii. 11; Jer. xxxi. 12. ‡ Isa. xlv. 4.

§ Joel iii. 18; 1 Kings xix. 4; Deut. xxxii. 13.

|| Ps. xcii. 12; Jer. viii. 22; Cant. ii. 3; Joel i. 12; Cant. iv. 13.

¶ Cant. vi. 6; Ezek. xxxiv; Ps. lxxv. 11—13. ** Dan. xi. 41, 45.

†† Ezek. xx. 6, 15.

‡‡ Deut. viii. 7, 9.

would surrender, than this: "I will take you away to a land like your own land, a land of corn and wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of oil olive and honey."* The traveller who passes through but a few paths, and those only at one season, might be tempted to doubt the description. He, however, who is acquainted with Syria in every part, and has viewed it throughout the varying year, can fully confirm this testimony to its excellence even now. Within its four corners nature has collected the luxuries of every clime, and all possible combinations of panoramic beauty. True, indeed, desolation has wrought strange havoc in the greater part of Palestine. This was distinctly foretold. But yet, even in its ruin, enough remains of its pristine glory to display both what it was, and what it is to be again.

No other country, I believe, of the same size can show the like variety. For instance, from Alpine snows on the summit of Hermon, 10,000 feet high, within a distance of some seventy miles, the traveller descends through every gradation of climate to a region truly sub-tropical, in that deepest spot on earth, the south of the Jordan valley. To those who know the land of Israel well, I have but to mention in further confirmation of this, the weird Dead Sea; the lovely Gennesareth; the park-like woods of Gilead and Bashan; the pastures of Moab; the wide plains, such as Sharon, Esdraelon, and Acca, hemmed in by purple mountain walls; the central limestone range with an average height of over 2,000 feet, the largest portion of the country, diversified as all limestone hills are by bold gorges, large caves, deep valleys, and fantastic summits; and, less beautiful indeed in themselves, but ever forming a striking contrast to the rest, barren stretches of russet-brown desert. The landscape of Syria, flooded

* 2 Kings xviii. 32.

as it is by an exquisite brightness and delicacy of light, requires for its appreciation a trained eye, and therefore grows in beauty as one becomes the more familiar with it. This will account for many of the mistakes on this subject made by passing travellers. Mr. H. A. Harper's faithful delineation of Palestine scenery has, however, greatly served of late to convey a just impression of these varied excellencies.

APPENDIX D.

THE SEVEN-HILLED CITY.

WHEN first led irresistibly to the conclusion that "Babylon the Great," the Romish Church, and those, especially at the last, whom she persuades to drink with her of "the wine of her fornication," will at "the time of the end" have the seat of her power transferred to Jerusalem, the author felt himself called to face an apparent difficulty. Rome on the banks of the Tiber is indeed a "seven-hilled city" (see note, p. 54), and if the "Harlot" is to be identified at the very time of her last cruel and intoxicating triumph and swift-following destruction by sitting on "seven mountains" (Rev. xvii. 9), she must be still on the ancient imperial site. This seemed at first an inevitable conclusion. But the thought occurred, "What if the Papal power should find itself, when transferred to Jerusalem, also situated on 'seven mountains,' would not Divine wisdom be shown in such a reconciliation of the difficulty?" Calmly the author set himself to recall all that he had read or could remember about "the Holy City," and with a sense of singular relief was enabled to come to the deliberate conclusion that JERUSALEM WAS, AND NOW IS, SITUATED ON JUST "SEVEN MOUNTAINS." Briefly to show this, let it be observed first, that Josephus, in his description of the Jerusalem of Herod's time, tells us in a short and somewhat confused account, which evidently leaves much to be desired, of five hills which formed the main site

of the city. These he carefully names. On the east, going from south to north, were Mount Ophel, Mount Moriah, and Mount Bezetha, while separated from them by the Tyropæan or Cheesemonger's valley, running right through the city from north to south, were Mount Zion and Mount Acra on the west. Moriah, formerly the Temple area, and now the mosque enclosure; Bezetha, the present Mohammedan quarter; Zion, the Jewish, Protestant, and Armenian district; and Acra, the Latin and Greek part, are now easily to be traced within the four walls of the modern city. Ophel is seen stretching away outside the present wall to the south-east. Here, then, at once are five mountains. But if we refer to Jeremiah xxxi. 39, we find mention incidentally of a sixth mountain, evidently *an extreme limit upon which the city once stood, and was to be erected again*, viz. "the hill Gareb." Thus in ancient records we find six mountains actually mentioned as forming the city of Jerusalem, and in such a way as to leave it quite open to suppose there may have been another.

But now for the facts. Five hills, we have already remarked, are distinctly traceable in the modern city, four within the walls, and one without to the south-east. On the east, south, and part of the west, Jerusalem is surrounded by valleys. On the north and north-west, however, though a foss, partly natural and partly artificial, exists, this is not the case. The ground stretches away with a gentle swell, but so as to form *two other distinct hills*, separated by a well-marked valley, through which runs the Damascus road. One of these, that on the north-west, which has been supposed by many to be "the hill Gareb," and is so marked on some maps, is a considerable eminence, where the magnificent Russian buildings, the church, pilgrim hospice, and consulate now stand, commanding very fine views of the modern city

that Muscovite ambition purposes one day to dominate. Parted from this by a considerable depression, some quarter of a mile to the north-east, lies another well-marked hill (perhaps Goath, Jeremiah xxxi. 89), where the slaughter-house is now situated, and one or two conspicuous Muslim dwellings. Both these are as much mountains as Acra or Bezetha. Those who have well examined all this ground cannot doubt that a part of both these two hills were once enclosed in Herod's third wall. They were probably left out of account by Josephus, because these portions of the city were considered suburban. Both hills abound with very extensive ruins, and more especially a countless number of old rock-cut cisterns, undoubtedly very ancient, which are being to this day constantly discovered, crowded together so as to betoken formerly a compact mass of houses. For this reason most of the explorers in modern times have included part of the two hills in question within the limits of the ancient city. To me there seems every reason to suppose that the whole of the summit of the hill to the north-east was included within Herod's third wall, for following northward along the valley of Jehoshaphat, and even for a part of the way turning to the west, this hill has rocky precipitous sides, suited for a natural fortification. Anyone in England can verify these statements for themselves, even more accurately than by an unscientific investigation on the spot, if they will carefully examine the deeply interesting model of Jerusalem and its environs, exhibited by the Palestine Exploration Fund in the Science and Art Department of the South Kensington Museum. The importance of such a test is greatly enhanced by the fact, that this model gives us the true ancient lie of the ground in and around the city, being an embossed copy of the rock contours, made accurately to scale, from years of survey and exploration, by Captain Warren, R.E., Captain Wilson, R.E., Herr

Schick of Jerusalem, and others. It is another invaluable addition to our knowledge of the Holy Land just now, for which, under God, we are indebted to the Palestine Exploration Fund. By it we may learn that *Jerusalem formerly consisted of just "seven mountains,"* as it does now. And here we cannot but pause to admire and adore the Divine wisdom exhibited by our covenant God in His Word and works. By thus arranging the sites and declaring the destinies of these two cities, He has made it possible for us to recognise and shun the Latin apostasy during the past 1,260 years of power in "seven-hilled Rome," and to recognise and shun it still during its final 1,260 days or three and a half years yet to be passed in Jerusalem, also on seven hills, however much it may then have appeared to change in that last dangerous and ensnaring time.

I would not for one moment be understood to overturn or shake that corner-stone of Apocalyptic interpretation, which has unanswerably fixed the identity of Rome with Babylon during the past 1,260 years, by the seat of the reigning apostasy being in the city which has ever been known as "seven-hilled Rome." But it does seem important to show, that, when this apostate Church goes, as it is declared she will in the end, for three and a half years to Jerusalem, there too she will be also on "seven mountains." Romish controversialists have endeavoured to parry the home-thrust of Revelation xvii. 9, by pointing to a seven-hilled Constantinople or Geneva. But could it be said of either of these that it was in the days of John "the great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth?" (Rev. xvii. 28). Why, even the Roman Catholic Douay version admits that this must be Rome; and so I firmly believe. Long before John wrote the Revelation, Rome, in song and prose, was specially celebrated as the "seven-hilled city," and no change of abode for a few years at the close of its terrible

career can ever wipe off from the Papacy the mark by which the saints of God have so long known it to be Babylon—the site of the Imperial City. Still, I ask, is it not deeply important to see that at the time of the change, when the “woman” rides the beast under its fifth form, it will, though in Jerusalem, still be on “seven mountains?” Have we not here a double identification?

Let me here again advert to the fact, which must not be overlooked, that all the Christian writers of the first three centuries, whose unanimous opinion on such a subject deserves great weight, understood that Antichrist, when fully developed, would appear at Jerusalem, and sit there in a temple. Does not the circumstance of our being able to trace just seven hills on the site of ancient and modern Jerusalem seem, in connection with what has been said above, another remarkable point of agreement between the Historical and Futurist schemes of interpretation as regards the events of the last time?

APPENDIX E.

WAR AGAINST THE WITNESSES.

IN "a supplementary note to his commentary on the Revelation of St. John" the Rev. S. Garratt declares his belief that the 1,260 years of the Church's witness in sack-cloth ended in 1867, "having commenced with the Edict of Phocas in 607;" and this opinion is shared by many others. He considers that a period longer or shorter must be allowed for the event in Revelation x. 7, which is said to happen when the witnesses "shall have finished their testimony"—viz. that which is thus described: "The beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall *make war against them.*"

He calls attention to the fact that "over the Protestant Churches there has come of late years another tone of feeling; the old testimony has been strangely relinquished." As one evidence of this he instances the Pan-Anglican Synod held in this very year 1867, at Lambeth—an assembly of bishops from all branches of the Anglican communion, "who *carefully excluded the word Protestant.*" It would not have appeared at all if some bishops of the American Protestant Episcopal Church had not insisted on retaining it as part of the title of their Church—an exception which made the fact more striking, because America is not within the Roman Empire, the great platform of Apocalyptic prophecy." The Bishop of Lichfield, speaking in Convocation, in debate on the Œcumeni-

cal Council, in 1870, significantly called this Pan-Anglican Synod "*the greatest event since the Reformation,*" and declared that "*its great object was the re-union of Christendom.*" Mr. Garratt reminds us that in the same year, 1867, "the Œcumenical Council of the Roman Church was indicted, and since that time events have been taking place with startling rapidity which seem likely to change the political aspect of the globe." Answering the objection of those who say that "nothing has happened startling enough for the close of so remarkable period" as the 1,260 years, this author makes the following remarks: "An Œcumenical Council, the first for three hundred years; the definition of Papal infallibility in the midst of such darkness and lightnings as to fill with terror those who witnessed a mortal man showing himself as God; such a war as neither we nor our fathers have seen the like of; the apparent imminency of a Roman Empire revived; the separation of Church and State; the loss by the Pope of his temporal power; and a strange surrender on the part of Protestant nations of their protest against the Papacy, the Governments of England and Prussia constituting themselves guardians of the Pope's spiritual independence, if not of his temporal authority;—what can be more startling than all these things, which have followed in quick succession since 1867?" To this may be added the deeply significant fact that in *June of the same year, 1867*, as I have already shown, *the Imperial rescript is dated which gave subjects of foreign powers, for the first time, a right to hold property in the Holy Land*—an event decidedly preparatory to the return of the Jews to Palestine, and the great Council of Jerusalem.* All these, and the other complex movements of our day, are so many battles in the campaign now carried on against the

* See *supra*, page 13.

witnesses, the Protestant Churches, which will end in their being overcome and killed.

Issues of vast importance, not only to the world but to the Church, seem to hang upon the decisions of the Conference now sitting at Constantinople. One great and apparent danger is that, to avoid war with Russia, England and Germany are tempted, as the only mode of escape, to ally themselves with Roman Catholic countries and the Papal power. The temptation is equally strong to avoid the terrible strides made by the secret societies within their borders. The great levelling and republican principles which are everywhere gaining ground; the tendencies of all systems, classes, and races of men to combine, side by side with the bigoted and intolerant attitude assumed of late by such countries as the Republic of France, and the recent Republic of Spain, when legislating on religious questions, all seem part of the war against the witnesses, leading up to that powerful and united condition of the "beast," or Roman world, which will render possible and certain throughout the countries composing it a common consent in apostasy and persecution.

It is many years ago now since the Papal policy commenced to favour Democracy and its leaders, and these have in their turn manifested a disposition to foster and support the Roman Church.* The history of Ireland during the last fifty years has been a sad illustration of this. How well Romish superstition, though itself the sternest and most cruel despotism, can accommodate itself to, and flourish under democratic forms of government, has been

* The Paris correspondent of *The Record* in March, 1836, wrote: "The whole Liberal and Radical Press seems no longer to object to the restoration of the Papal power, now that the Pope's Belgian, Irish, and lastly French policy indicates a transference of confidence on the part of His Holiness, from crowned heads to the democracy and its leaders."

shown in the republics of South America. The state of modern society and the political temper of our time in almost every land seem to point to the formation of "republics all over the Roman world," and Mr. Garratt appears to be right in thinking this a "not improbable mode in which the revival of the Ten-horned Beast might be accomplished." He goes on to say: "This is what is meant by the phrase, 'the United States of Europe.' The secret societies are said to cherish the design of a grand European revival of the Roman republic. *The second, third, fourth, and fifth heads of the Ten-horned Beast were all republican,* and the establishment of a system of European republics would be the rising up of another head, one 'of the seven.' . . . The ten horns might be ten kingdoms or ten republics, but as the horns of the beast in Dan. vii. are identical with the toes of the image in Dan. ii., and the stone cut out without hands is to smite the image on its ten toes, the number must be ten at the close as well as at the beginning; and it seems too likely that England will be one of them."

And while the world without is thus preparing to unite in order to lend its power to crush the witnesses, the war against them is progressing far more fatally from within. The work of such associations as the English Church Union Society, whose avowed object is to bring about a union of Christendom, not by reforming the Churches of Rome and Greece, but by finding *a basis of union with them in their present corrupt and apostate state*, is an evidence of this. The Society in question, and many of those who sympathise with it, seek in the most lawless manner to familiarise Church of England congregations with the ritual and doctrines of the Roman Church, and to deny the distinctly Protestant character of our Articles and Liturgy, thus troubling the minds of loyal Churchmen, and giving just cause of offence and estrangement to all

pious Nonconformists. Similar societies are said to be actively at work in the Churches of Rome and Greece. Still more dangerous than this distinctly Romanising tendency, perhaps, is the broad Neologian tone creeping into all the Protestant Churches—a tone only too painfully apparent in their various organs of the press. Dogmatic teaching is avoided, if not actually denounced, protest is treated as violent, or at least uncharitable, and truth is questioned, diluted with human error, and denied till there is little or nothing left for which to witness. That the school of liberal and philosophic thought should ever prove persecuting may at first sight seem improbable. But this is no new thing: Mosheim tells us: “If we except that of Nero, there was no reign under which the Christians were more injuriously and cruelly treated, than under that of the wise and virtuous Marcus Aurelius.” This philosophic Roman Emperor “lived and died,” Professor Matthew Arnold says, “in a state of society modern by its essential characteristics—in an epoch akin to our own.” And speaking of the cruel murders he perpetrated, this same exponent of nineteenth-century latitudinarianism deliberately declares: “Marcus Aurelius *incurs no moral reproach by having authorised the punishment of the Christians*; he does not thereby become in the least what *we mean by a persecutor*.” Such is the mercy “the witnesses” may expect from the “men who stand in the forefront of the liberalism of the age.”

In addition to these attacks upon the truth, worldliness is making subtle, but not less sure, inroads upon Christian society. Material prosperity, the increase of human culture and refinement, the great advance of education, while daily more widely divorced from scriptural teaching,—these and such like things are promoting a state of ease and luxury very injurious to the cause of vital religion.

The air, too, is full of spirits, and in England at least

all manner of errors are abroad under the specious garb of deeper truth. Doubtless it is now as Dean Good, in his "Rome's Tactics," has shown it was at the time of the Reformation. Then the Jesuits sent out preachers, who, as zealous Nonconformists and others, endeavoured to lead many astray by erroneous teaching under the guise of evangelical doctrine, in order thus to divide Protestants and bring the truth into contempt. This was at a season when they were watched and feared. Is there any reason to suppose that in these days of false security, when this dangerous and unchanged order, driven as a moral plague out of all other lands is welcomed in ours, they are less active than of old in this direction ?

Turn where we will, the "war against the witnesses" is being fiercely waged, and the present state of evangelical Christendom, especially as it respects the organisation of churches and societies, proves to those well acquainted with their inner life that it has been, alas ! only too successful.

APPENDIX F.

THE GREEK "LITTLE HORN."

IN the eighth chapter of Daniel we have a picture of a contest between a ram and a he-goat with "a notable horn between his eyes," ending in the complete victory of the latter. We are expressly told that these are the kingdoms of Persia and Grecia.* Out of the victorious Grecian Empire, when the "great horn" was broken, four notable horns "came up," and "out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land."† This is explained to mean that the first Grecian kingdom, which conquered Persia, should be broken up into four kingdoms, and it was fulfilled when Alexander's four generals divided his dominions at his death into the kingdoms of Syria, Egypt, Macedonia, and Thrace.‡ Out of one of these four another power was to arise, obviously similar in character to the "little horn" of Daniel vii., but different from it in geographical limits and general policy. Some have considered this little horn to be the Mohammedan imposture, but to such an interpretation there are many objections. It is especially said of the power in question, "by peace he shall destroy many," which cannot be a fitting description of the secret of Mohammed's success, won as it was entirely by the sword; while the time of the little horn's greatest activity and strength, "the latter time of their kingdom, when trans-

* Daniel viii. 20, 21. † Daniel viii. 8, 9. ‡ Daniel viii. 21--23.

gressors are come to the full," shows us plainly that it must be sought elsewhere than in a system now fast waning, and which is to fall before the closing scenes of the time of the end.*

It is everyway consistent with the interpretation of the similar symbol in Daniel vii., generally admitted to apply to Papal Rome, to consider this second little horn as the Greek Church, representing, probably, the Eastern Churches as well. It is said of this Church: it "waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land (Palestine), and it waxed great, even to the host of heaven, and it cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them. Yea, he magnified himself even to the prince of the host, and by him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down. And an host was given him against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression, and it cast down the truth to the ground; and it practised and prospered." This conduct, it must be remembered, is to characterise the little horn, principally at the last, "when the transgressors are come to the full," and hence, doubtless, its application to restored Israel and the Temple service. The geographical boundaries answer to the seat of the Greek Church. In the further explanation of the symbol by Gabriel we learn that this Church is spoken of as "understanding dark sentences." He is "mighty, but not by his own power," and "shall cause craft to prosper in his hand, and by peace shall destroy many."† The first of these attributes would seem to imply a pride of orthodoxy. The great pretension of the Greek Church is a profound knowledge of theological and ecclesiastical questions, and hence its assumption of the title, "The Holy Orthodox Church." Unlike the

* Revelation xi. 14, xvi. 12.

† Daniel viii. 23—25.

Latin apostasy, it has no power of itself, but has mighty power through the help of another—the Emperor of Russia. It is not by war, but by crafty peace that it will prosper most. Nothing could better describe the progress made by the Greek Church, as connected with the monarch from whose support it derives its power, during this century. While as far as possible avoiding war, Russia has, by fomenting dissensions in Turkey and Central Asia, and taking advantage of differences amongst European nations, greatly advanced the power and prestige of the Greek Church. Those who have resided in the East will well understand this. The Emperor of Russia is not insincere, as so many suppose, in declaring his desire for peace. This has been the real policy of the “little horn.” It has sought by craft to divide, weaken, and disintegrate other great powers, and to rise peaceably to greater influence through their ruin.

That the Greek Church is equally apostate with the Church of Rome needs no demonstration. It is true it substitutes the worship of pictures or icons for that of images, requires marriage instead of celibacy in the case of the beneficed clergy, denies the universal supremacy of the Pope, and in some other minor points differs from the other little horn. But in arrogantly fulminating anathemas against all without its pale; in placing tradition on a level with the Scriptures; in the worship of saint and angel intercessors, especially of the Virgin Mary, and of idols in the shape of pictures, relics, and sacramental wafer; in exalting human mediators in the person of the priest to the alone office of Christ; and above all in the doctrine of transubstantiation, which we have seen to be essentially the mark of Antichrist,* the Greek Church bears upon its dark face the brand of apostasy.

* See *supra*, pp. 51, 52.

APPENDIX G.

A PAPAL RAILWAY IN PALESTINE.

THE Roman correspondent of the *Times*, who commences his letter dated September, 1876, by observing that "the Pontifical were the last among the States of Europe into which the 'iron horse' was admitted," gives the following account of a projected railway under the auspices of the Papacy, between Jaffa and Jerusalem :—

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Universal Church, on the other. 'Armed with the powers given to him through these documents,' he sends out, on the anniversary of the memorable 20th of September, a memorial addressed individually to the wealthier and more distinguished Catholics in Europe and elsewhere, announcing the project and setting forth the plan for carrying it into execution, which, having been first examined and favourably reported upon by the Sacred College of the Propaganda, has been approved, blessed, and recommended to the Catholic world by His Holiness. It is proposed to obtain 100 foundation members, and that done, their names and the amount of their respective offerings are to be published at the head of a prospectus to be diffused throughout the world, inviting Catholics of all nations to constitute themselves shareholders, and draw their dividends in the form of feelings of satisfaction at having assisted by their subscriptions, 'however small they may be,' in the formation of a port and railway intended to facilitate pilgrims travelling to Jerusalem, and pilgrimages to the sanctuaries and holy places, and in planting Catholic colonies and agricultural and industrial establishments in Palestine, to which latter aims the profits of the railway and port are to be devoted.

"The purpose to be secured, and the reasons for initiating the undertaking, are set forth in the preamble. Signor Pierotti states that during the twenty-two years he has resided in Palestine, directing works of construction, and accompanying Sorraya Pasha, Governor of the country, in his military excursions, he has seen with grief the progress of events, very few of which, he is bound to confess, have been of advantage to the Catholics, and that for the want of material resources. Notwithstanding some partial results Catholics have attained, they are, he says, always inferior to the prodigious successes accomplished by the schismatics (Russians, Greeks, Armenians) and by the

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Protestant missionaries. The first three have built a number of convents, hospitals, and other establishments; the Protestants have planted new missions, opened schools, orphan asylums, and hospitals, and founded colonies which are prospering and acquiring a large extension of ground. Numerous Protestant caravans are continually passing through Palestine, carrying material aid to their co-religionists; thousands of Russians, Greeks, and Armenians visit the sanctuaries of the Holy Land, and enrich their respective convents. This remarkable movement, he continues, has been especially manifest since 1854, and he can affirm that Catholicism, which in other times dominated in Palestine, now looks on with grief at the progressive triumph of the other Christian communities daily acquiring increased influence in the country. Catholicism cannot therefore, he argues, prosper in Palestine, and reoccupy its place and legitimate character, without the succour of its brethren throughout the universe—who are therefore urgently entreated to come forward and aid in this ‘Evangelical work.’

“‘To attain the desired end of securing to the Catholic Church continual and abundant means it is necessary to organise permanent works, capable after the first outlay of sustaining themselves, and whose free incomes will serve to aid the missions, build churches, found schools, orphan asylums, and hospitals, and open industrial establishments.’

“Thus the Catholic (Roman) Church, for the sake of her own prosperity, has at last made an alliance with modern progress, and that in the very birthplace of the Christian religion.”

APPENDIX H.

THE STATE OF EUROPE.

THE following extract from a recent number of the *Times* is deeply significant :—

“ About a month ago a considerable number of English officers left the country on their way North, South, East, everywhere but West. They were bent on no daring exploits, and ran no risks, yet they are able to bring home strong opinions, more or less correct, on the military strength of foreign powers and their methods of fighting. Everywhere the nations are polishing their arms and testing each joint of their harness. Strategy and tactics are the topics of fashionable conversation, and scientific men vie with each other in perfecting weapons for destruction. What strikes a looker-on most is the earnestness of it all. The terrible reality of the preparation for war weighs upon peaceful folks like the atmosphere before a thunder-storm, and they feel oppressed by the conviction that almost any nation which may hit upon a useful device unknown to its neighbours will seize the opportunity for bringing the black clouds into collision. Thus it happens that the Autumn manœuvres of Europe are almost as interesting as the war in the East. Indeed, Turkey and Servia might have fought to their hearts' content, but for the danger of bringing about fighting between those great military powers which are arming, drilling, and practising the manœuvres of the field as if their lives were each moment at stake. Our own officers, who have been watch-

ing these manœuvres from a professional point of view, have come home seriously impressed by the extraordinary efficiency attained by one foreign nation after another. As usual, Germany stands in front of all. She is ready at all points. Since she beat down France with her rapid mobilisation, tactical training, and superior artillery she has quickened her mobilisation by several days, and improved and codified the system of tactics forced upon her by the sufferings her victorious legions felt from the fire of the chasseur. She has entirely re-armed both her infantry and artillery, developed the use of railways in war, and added to her numerical strength by practically changing part of her Landsturm into Landwehr—a measure much the same as if we should turn our militia into regular troops. As for France, she has completely re-organised her whole military system, re-armed both infantry and artillery, improved her cavalry, shortened her time for mobilisation, enforced discipline among her troops, decentralised her stores, and studied tactics day and night. Austria re-armed her infantry long ago, and is now re-arming her artillery—not before it was needed. She also has impressed the study of tactics on her officers as the one thing needful, and has so developed her organisation that she can put nearly double the number of men in the field that fought at Koniggratz and Custoza. Russia has adopted a new organisation, and is still in the throes of change, fortunately, we believe, for the peace of Europe. She too has re-armed, and developed new ideas on the subject of tactics. She is still behind other nations, but the latent might of a nation which proposes to put more than two millions of men eventually in the field is appalling to the imagination."

APPENDIX I.

THE RUSSIAN "SCOURGE."

THE following is an extract from Rufin Piotrowski's work on Siberia, which was published in 1863 by an English firm :—" Sierocinski and four others who had been drafted into the ranks of the Siberian army were condemned each to 7,000 blows with a stick, ' without mercy.' If any one of the members outlived the sentence he was to be sent to the Nerchinsk mines for the rest of his life. The great mass of persons implicated were variously condemned to 2,000, 1,000, or 500 blows with the stick, and those who survived in some cases to hard labour for life, in others for a number of years to penal colonisation, and others again for military service. . . . At daybreak two battalions of 1,000 men marched out of Omsk, one charged with the execution of those condemned to 7,000 blows, the other with the execution of the lesser sentences. The battalion halted, each formed in double line face to face, leaving a passage through the long-drawn ranks. The executioner, Galafieyef, superintended the arrangements, and remained with the men who had to give the 7,000 strokes. According to general usage the soldiers charged with such duties are placed closely shoulder to shoulder, in dealing the blows but slightly raise the arm from the elbow, and keep their feet together as when standing on parade. The sticks should only be so thick that three can be dropped into a carbine barrel. On this occasion all this was reversed : Galafieyef placed the soldiers at arm's

length from each other, made them raise their arms high in carrying out the sentence, and the sticks were thrice the usual weight and size. The victims were brought from their prisons to the place of execution. The bloody work was begun simultaneously by both the battalions. From both came the same shrieks of agony. Sierocinski is left to the last, and compelled to witness the fate of his friends ere his own turn came, and he had long to wait for that deadly walk. Then his shirt was stripped from his shoulders, and his hands, according to the regulations in such cases, fastened to a carbine, held by two soldiers, who thus compelled him to keep regular step. The order to march was given. The priest entered the street of death, reciting in a low voice, 'Miserere mei, Deus, secundum magnam misericordiam tuam.' Galafieyef shouting frantically, 'Harder! harder! strike harder!' and the submissive tools of despotism obeyed so well that Sierocinski, after walking once down the line and receiving 1,000 blows, fell insensible, weltering in his blood. He was lifted to his feet to fall again immediately, and then a hurdle, prepared for this occasion, was brought. He was bound on it kneeling, and so dragged up and down until his sentence was fulfilled. He had given at first a few shrieks of agony, and still was breathing until the 4,000 blows; the remaining 8,000 were struck on his corpse, or rather his now fleshless bones. Eye-witnesses assure me that the flesh was cut in strips by the rods, the very bones were crushed and splintered, and the entrails exposed."

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